

HOME NEWS

Steel union leaders to decide on national strike against background of workers' unease

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor

Steel union leaders meet in London tonight to confirm or suspend their decision to mount a national strike from January 2. The critical meeting takes place against a background of unease in some steelmaking areas about the first all-out stoppage in the industry since 1926.

The executive of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation sent out its strike instruction 12 days ago to 90,000 members employed by the British Steel Corporation, and the last few days have seen almost frantic attempts by management to dissuade workers from striking.

ISTC representatives in South Wales yesterday rejected a move to set up a new "Triple Alliance" between steelworkers, miners and transport workers, arguing that any industrial action against BSC's shutdown programme should be nationwide rather than confined to Wales. And there is a reaction against the strike call at the Scunthorpe steel complex, in Lincolnshire, although a local official said that, despite some reluctance, men at the plants there would be "pretty solidly behind the executive".

The falling-off of militancy in the union could also be detected in a decision by Corby steelworkers to begin negotiations on redundancy pay and the recommendation from yesterday's 100-strong ISTC conference to retain both the threatened Port Talbot and Llanwern works, but on a reduced scale. These attitudes fit in with BSC's plan to axe 52,000 jobs and reduce steelmaking capacity.

Sir Charles Villiers, chairman of the British Steel Corporation,

Windscale contamination inquiry starts

An investigation has been started into the case of a fitter who became contaminated with radioactivity in the nuclear fuel reprocessing area at Windscale, Cumbria.

A report by the Health and Safety Executive discloses that there were 16 other incidents at nuclear installations in the third quarter of this year. None involved a "significant radiological hazard to persons on the nuclear site or to members of the public," the report says.

On August 29 the fitter was found during routine monitoring to have radioactive contamination on his hand and face and on his protective overall. The initial assessment was that the permissible quarterly dose level might have been exceeded and he was withdrawn from the area pending investigations.

Radioactive material escaped after a fire in the decanning plant at Windscale on July 16. Workers in the plant and nearby buildings were moved as a precaution.

One worker inhaled caesium, equal to a dose of about six per cent of the permissible annual level. The total release into the atmosphere was about a quarter of the normal annual discharge of caesium from Windscale.

Two workers in the plutonium purification plant at Windscale sustained finger injuries in July which became contaminated.

Neither received a significant dose and both are now back at work.

Another Windscale worker was withdrawn from the active area after a finger wound last August, which became slightly contaminated with radioactive material.

Defects have appeared in some gas-cooled reactors at Calder Hall, next to Windscale, and Chapelcross, at Annan, Scotland.

The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate says it is satisfied there is no danger of any radiation leaks.

The defects are minor: no cracks but bubbles in the pipe-work welds. Examinations are being made to be sure there is no further deterioration.

Civil Service to seek talks on pay limits

By David Felton
Labour Reporter

Civil Service unions are to seek early meetings with ministers to establish the effect of the Government's plans to set cash limits for pay increases before the settlement date for white collar civil servants.

During the last 10 days the Government has made clear its intention to hold down Civil Service pay awards by imposing the cash limits. Unions view this with alarm, particularly after the recruitment ban introduced after the 151 per cent pay deal last April.

Senior department officials earlier this week told a Commons select committee that if the eventual pay settlement exceeded the cash limit, the excess might have to be recouped by cutting staff levels.

The unions have already lost 20,000 jobs through the recruitment ban, and a further 40,000 in the cuts announced by the Government recently.

They will want assurances that there will be no large reductions in staffing if the cash limit proves to be too low. They will argue that the service has been pared to such an extent that further cuts will prevent it from carrying out its functions effectively.

Despite the Government's determination to make the cash limit stick, it has been emphasized that it is not a target but a ceiling. The unions still hope there will be some leeway.

The white collar unions which represent about 600,000 civil servants, are due to settle by April 1: the industrial civil servants' agreement expires on July 1.

Unions are still evaluating the effect of the job cuts announced earlier this month, but the general muted reaction is an indication of their relief that the cuts were not as severe as they had feared.

However, the Society of Civil and Public Servants has called on the TUC to make effective action against the cuts.

Mr Gerry Gillman, society general secretary, in a letter yesterday to Mr Len Murray, general secretary of the TUC, said: "Sunday solidarity and meal-break militancy are not enough."

Mr Gillman called on the TUC to stage a mid-week day of action. "A Sunday afternoon demonstration in March followed by lunch-time rallies in May, scarcely amount to a confident lead to millions of workers" to take effective action.

Union will back industrial action to protect public service jobs

By Our Labour Editor

The General and Municipal Workers' Union has said its branches in town halls and public services to "resist redundancies" that are expected from the Government's cuts in public spending. Industrial action to protect jobs will get official union backing.

That strong line is part of the union's new "Stop the cuts" campaign, launched yesterday, as local authority managements discuss the employers' pay offer of 13 to 14 per cent.

Mr David Bassett, the union's general secretary and chairman of the influential TUC Economic Committee, said: "We will be opposing cuts in the service and jobs. This campaign is to ensure that our members are fully informed of the facts of the Tory cutbacks, and are behind the TUC and our campaign against Government economic and social policies."

"We believe there is a tremendous revulsion beginning to arise in the country against the Tory policy. But there is still a massive amount of anti-public service, anti-social security propaganda being churned out by the Tory media."

"We are doing our best to counter that propaganda. We have facts and social justice on our side. I believe very soon we will have the full backing of the British public as well."

The union's campaign, causing an unprecedented £100,000, is aimed at large. Posters and pamphlets are being distributed by the thousand.

Mr Bassett predicted last night that the Government would be forced to "do a U-turn" on its economic and social policies in the middle of next year. "What we have to think about now is the attitude we take then," he said.

"There is little doubt that they will have to do it. Economic circumstances will force them."

GMWU shop stewards and officials are being urged to work in their localities with pressure groups, opposed to Government cuts, such as the Child Poverty Action Group, to create a coalition of opposition.

A rather different course of action is being proposed by the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE), which has

Natsopa and Sogat call off discussions on merger

By Our Labour Editor

The National Union of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel (Natsopa) has told its members that merger talks with the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (Sogat) have ended, for the time being at least.

In a circular to chapels (office branches), Mr Owen O'Brien, general secretary of Natsopa, recalls that considerable progress was made in the amalgamation talks and a feasibility study for a joint union was produced.

But Natsopa's executive council found three areas of serious difference on the rules, amalgamation talks and a feasibility study for a joint union was produced.

Mr O'Brien says in his circular: "We are also a number of other minor points which we ought to clarify. To this end, we asked Sogat: 'Is our next move a further meeting of the panels, or do you think we should go straight to a meeting between our two executive councils?'"

Sogat's amalgamation sub-committee felt that Natsopa was retreating from a position. Before the meeting could go straight to a meeting between our two executive councils?

Natsopa has decided that discussions with Sogat could not be brought to a conclusion before the meeting of its governing council in June, when a full report will be given.

Meanwhile Sogat leaders are discussing a merger with the industry's main craft print union, the National Graphical Association.

130 Labour MPs seek EEC curbs

By Our Political Staff

Mr Wedgwood Benn, former Secretary of State for Energy, is among 130 Labour MPs who have signed a Commons motion calling for greater control by the House of Commons over European Community legislation.

Other former ministers who have signed include Mr Albert Booth, Dr John Gilbert, Mr Guy Barnett, Mr Alfred Morris, Mr Dennis Davies, Mr Michael Heslop, and Mr Gerald Kaufman.

According to Mr Nigel Spearing, MP for Newham, South, one of the sponsors of the motion, none of the Labour pro-marketisers has signed a change of heart.

It is a further demonstration by committed anti-marketisers in support of the party's official policy of demanding greater control at Westminster over the activities of ministers in Brussels.

They ask that the European Communities Act 1972, should be amended "to restore to the United Kingdom Parliament control over the application of European economic Community law, taxation and budgetary policies."

Blunt role in 1951 spy escapes is admitted

By Stewart Tendler

Professor Blunt, the "fourth man" in the Philby affair, is now admitted he was a "between feet" escapee. Burgess and Maclean in 1951. Five years later he was again a messenger between Philby and the Russians.

In a series of answers to written questions submitted to The Times, Professor Blunt admitted that two men, whose names have been put forward as accomplices, were not working for the Russians. But he refused to say whether any of the people he recruited in Cambridge ever worked for the Russians.

At a press conference November Professor Blunt said his role in the defection of Burgess and Maclean amounts to a "between feet" escapee through Burgess, which led to an offer to go to Russia. I also cleaned up Burgess's affairs after his defection. In a Commons statement, Mrs Thatcher said he "actively helped" to escape.

Professor Blunt now says: "I did not establish a contact between Burgess and the Russians, having been out of touch with any Russians for a year. Burgess put me in touch with a Russian. I do not know who he was, but I do not know, 23 years later, recollect doing so."

Asked about Philby, "I was not in touch with him," he said. "I had no part in any contacts between Philby and the Russians except actually in 1951 when he conveyed a message from them to him."

In his answers, vetted by the Cabinet Office, Professor Blunt continues to refuse to enlarge on what information he provided to Burgess in 1951, and offer immunity for a confession. It has been suggested that the offer may have been influenced by the death of a former intelligence officer.

At the press conference Professor Blunt said no evidence had been presented against Burgess or Mr Guy Liddell, former senior SIS man. Professor Blunt now says: "I am absolutely convinced that neither Burgess nor Guy Liddell would have been involved with Russian espionage."

The professor has admitted being a "talent spotter" in Cambridge but said he recruited no more than a handful of potential agents. He refused to amplify the number of agents he recruited, or whether they were used by the Russians. That leads to the conclusion that there were others besides the professor.

Questions have been asked about the information Professor Blunt passed to the Russians while he was in SIS during the war. He says: "I did not receive or see in any other way operational intercepts, but the intercepts connected with German intelligence service were passed to this section of which I worked, which we concerned with the operation of the Abwehr."

The answer implicitly refutes suggestions that he saw secret material, which he was not authorized to do so, and that he had an accomplice.

Professor Blunt was asked: "Your interview and the various statements that have been made suggest that your role has been a minor one. How do you reconcile that with the fact that you were given immunity apparently on a pre-condition of a step-by-step disclosure of the number of agents believed that I could give them information of value—I believe I did."

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ORIENT

Joint approach on coal agreed to protect jobs

By Michael Hatfield
Political Reporter

Two nationalized industry chairmen, Sir Charles Villiers, of the British Steel Corporation and Sir Derek East, of the National Coal Board, last night agreed at a meeting in the Commons to make a joint approach to the Government to subsidize coking coal in order to protect jobs.

The BSC has sought a joint approach for some time but BSC has refused until last night when the two chairmen addressed a meeting of Labour backbenchers.

The attending the meeting claimed that Sir Charles, whose own problems at BSC were understood and appreciated, gave way under pressure at the last minute. Whether the NCB and BSC will succeed in getting a subsidy, the figure is between £30m and £36m a year—is another matter.

Sir Charles told the meeting that he understood the NCB's difficulties, but that there was little that BSC could do, given that it had to operate under Government cash limits and had to be competitive.

BSC has increasingly imported coking coal from West Germany, Australia and the United States, where it is subsidized to the extent that since 1975 the volume of coal required by the steel industry has been reduced by one million tons each year.

The NCB cannot compete against the subsidized coking and jobs are being threatened in 100 pits and 10,000 coalfields. Mr Tom Urwin, chairman of the Labour backbench industry group, said the joint approach was a great step forward.

Writ changes questions for Attorney General

By George Clark
Political Correspondent

Use of the Official Secrets Act as a means of preventing open discussion of proposed changes in the High Court rules was criticized yesterday by Mr Robert Kilroy-Silk, Labour MP for Ormskirk.

He said that he had tabled a series of questions to Sir Michael Havers, Attorney General, as the minister in the Commons answerable for the actions of the Lord Chancellor's department, after reading the correspondence initiated in The Times by Mr Arthur B.S. Weir, on October 14.

Mr Weir stated that the Supreme Court Rules Committee, in private, and without publishing a notice of its intentions, had decided to abolish the royal command that has been used in writs to defendants for some 700 years.

One of its members, Chief Master R. E. Ball, dissented from the report's recommendation and resigned his office.

In a subsequent letter to The Times, Mr Ball said that after consulting many people, including judges, barristers and solicitors, he found a nearly unanimous revulsion against the proposal.

There was a leak to the press, and for that the Lord Chancellor, who had initiated me of a breach of the Official Secrets Act and gave me a severe reprimand.

Mr Kilroy-Silk said last night: "If secrecy extends to something as straightforward and technical as the rules committee looking at reforms in the rules of court, we have come to a pretty pass."

Weather forecast and recordings

NOON TODAY Pressure is shown in millibars



NOON TODAY



Today

Sun rises: 8.02 am	Sun sets: 3.53 pm
Moon rises: 7.39 am	Moon sets: 4.32 pm
New moon: 8.23 am	
Tagging up: 4.23 pm to 7.33 am	
Rich water: London Bridge, 1.23 am, 7.0m (21.6ft); 1.42 pm, 7.0m (22.9ft); Avonmouth, 7.0 am, 13.0m (42.7ft); 7.18 pm, 13.0m (42.7ft); Dover, 10.41 am, 12.1m (39.7ft); 8.72 pm, 12.1m (39.7ft); Hull, 5.51 am, 7.0m (22.9ft); 6.10 pm, 7.3m (23.9ft); Liverpool, 11.2 am, 9.3m (30.4ft); 11.21 pm, 9.1m (29.9ft).	

Pressure will be high to the W with a cold N airstream covering all parts of the United Kingdom. Forecasts for 4 am to midnight: London, SE, E, England, East Angles: Sunny intervals, rather cloudy in places with showers some heavy and windy; wind NW, fresh to strong; max temp 5°C (41°F).

General S. England, Midlands: Sunny intervals, isolated showers.

Sea passages: S North Sea.

WEATHER REPORTS YESTERDAY MONDAY: c, cloud; s, fair; r, rain; s, sun; sh, sleet; sh, snow.

Aberdeen	4	10	10	10
Amsterdam	10	10	10	10
Antwerp	10	10	10	10
Birmingham	10	10	10	10
Bombay	10	10	10	10
Boston	10	10	10	10
Buenos Aires	10	10	10	10
Calcutta	10	10	10	10
Cardiff	10	10	10	10
Cebu	10	10	10	10
Dublin	10	10	10	10
Edinburgh	10	10	10	10
Hong Kong	10	10	10	10
London	10	10	10	10
Lyons	10	10	10	10
Madras	10	10	10	10
Manila	10	10	10	10
Mumbai	10	10	10	10
Nairobi	10	10	10	10
Paris	10	10	10	10
Rangoon	10	10	10	10
San Francisco	10	10	10	10
Singapore	10	10	10	10
Sourabaya	10	10	10	10
Tokyo	10	10	10	10
Yokohama	10	10	10	10

Crucial talks begin on Leyland pay

By R. W. Shakespeare
Northern Industrial Correspondent

Crucial moves by British Leyland to settle a new pay deal and shop-floor operating agreements for the 90,000 manual workers in its car plants began yesterday.

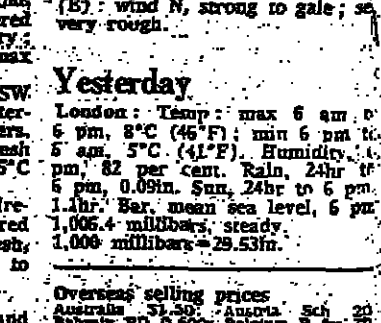
The negotiations may continue for several days because of the complexity of the deal. BL regards a final settlement on pay and new working arrangements as vital to any fresh approach to the Government, for more cash aid.

Workers have been offered a 5 per cent wage increase in reply to union demands for a package estimated at about 25 per cent.

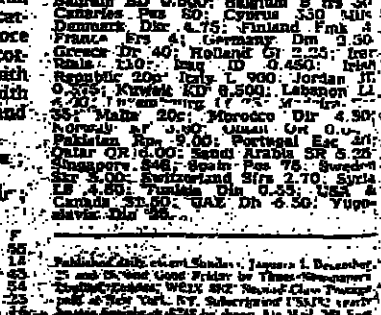
BL has said its offer is "final", but it could be negotiable if it becomes clear that the unions on more controversial issues, such as demarcation and mobility of labour, which have been linked with any new pay deal.

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Nairobi	10	10	10	10
Paris	10	10	10	10
Rangoon	10	10	10	10
San Francisco	10	10	10	10
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Sourabaya	10	10	10	10
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ME NEWS

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BR commuter lines 'in need of £1,000m'

By Michael Bailey
Transport Correspondent

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Population increase of 0.1% is the first since 1974

By John Roper
Health Services Correspondent

The population in England and Wales has increased for the first time since 1974 by 0.1 per cent, the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys said yesterday in its quarterly journal containing figures for the year mid-1978 to mid-1979.

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Only police at burial of murder victim

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Ladbroke given leave to appeal on licences

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Crisis in the steel towns 3—Corby: Belated attempt to diversify

Workers fear strike will cut redundancy money

From John Young
Planning Reporter

Like other new towns, Corby has over the years attracted thousands of newcomers, and the range of accents to be heard in the town is as varied as the range of jobs. But the steel industry, which has been the mainstay of the town since the steel industry was established in the 1930s, is that of Clydeside.

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First round to youth officer trying to clear name

By Annabel Ferriman

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Scientists check shopping precinct fire debris

From Our Correspondent

Scientists from the Government department at Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, were examining debris yesterday in an effort to establish the cause of a fire which severely damaged the market area in the St John's shopping precinct in Liverpool city centre on Monday night.

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HOME NEWS

Metropolitan authorities in clash over conference criticisms of government education policy

By Diana Geddes
Education Correspondent

A dispute broke out at a meeting of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities' education committee yesterday when it rejected resolutions criticising the Government which had been passed earlier in the day by a full conference of metropolitan education authorities.

The annual meeting in Kingston upon Thames of the 37 metropolitan education authorities in England passed resolutions attacking Government cuts in education spending and opposing the proposed assisted places scheme. Labour has a majority of one among the authorities.

Less than two hours later, the resolutions were rejected by a closed meeting of the AMA education committee, which is Conservative-controlled and which has representatives from only 24 of the 37 authorities. The 15 Labour members walked out.

Mrs Nicole Harrison, chairman of Haringey's education committee and leader of the Labour group on the AMA education committee, said afterwards: "It is ridiculous that you get a democratic decision by a conference representing every metropolitan education authority in the country and then you go into a small caucus and they reverse it."

But after the Labour walk-out, the AMA education committee agreed to recommend that every metropolitan education

authority should be represented. At the morning meeting, Conservative and Labour authorities joined to pass by 25 votes to 14 a resolution recording the meeting's "gravest concern (at) the severity of the spending cuts in education proposed by the Government, which inevitably will lead to a lowering of standards and of morale in the service."

The meeting urged the Government to "reverse its divisive and disastrous policies" and to maintain at least the present levels of expenditure on all forms of state education. The meeting passed by 23 votes to 21 a motion noting the "alarm" over the proposal to spend £60m on places at independent schools while cutting £300m from the normal education budget. It also recorded its "complete opposition" to the assisted places scheme.

Sir Ashley Bramall, Labour leader of the Inner London Education Authority, said the financial aspect of the assisted places scheme was a serious irritant. But the real menace was that the scheme was intended to transfer the business of getting university places from the public to the private sector.

It would drive education back to the situation before the Second World War when state schools were not expected to have academic highfliers, he said.

Mr Neil Scrimshaw, Conservative chairman of Birmingham education committee, argued

that only 1 or 2 per cent of children would be involved in the scheme; 98 per cent of the education service would remain as it was at the moment. Only £5m would be spent in the first year out of an education budget of £6,000m. The scheme had to be kept in perspective, he said.

Mr Peter Newsam, ILEA chief education officer, argued that although the scheme would only concern 2 per cent of children, it would be 2 per cent of the brightest 10 per cent, and would therefore take a fifth of the highflyers out of state schools. That could be a catastrophe for six forms, he said. Councillor J. W. Withnall, Labour, of Walsall, said that the scheme would not benefit the able working class children whom it was intended to help, as their parents would not know how to use the scheme. Assisted places would go usually to children whose parents were considering independent schools anyway.

Mr Peter Horton, Labour chairman of Sheffield education committee, said that Sheffield would try to hinder the scheme, even if it became law, in the same way as the Tory authorities had hindered the introduction of comprehensive schools.

Mrs Angela Rumbold, Conservative chairman of the AMA education committee, said that she shared the meeting's concern about the possible effect of the cuts. But she also believed they could help by focusing attention on "more basic solutions to problems."

SDLP fury at 'No unity' remark by Mr Atkins

From Christopher Thomas
Belfast

The Government's delicate agreement with Northern Ireland politicians for a constitutional conference beginning on January 7 survived a day of doubt and confusion yesterday which might easily have seen its downfall.

The Social Democratic and Labour Party said it was furious with Mr Humphrey Atkins, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, for saying Irish unity would be ruled out after the proposed conference. Mr John Hume, party leader, promptly issued a public challenge to Mr Atkins to explain himself.

Mr Atkins remained silent, but the Northern Ireland Office said he stood by a six-point agreement with the SDLP which four days ago persuaded the party to take part in the conference. Despite strong words of condemnation by party leaders of what they saw as backtracking by Mr Atkins, the conference was still on last night.

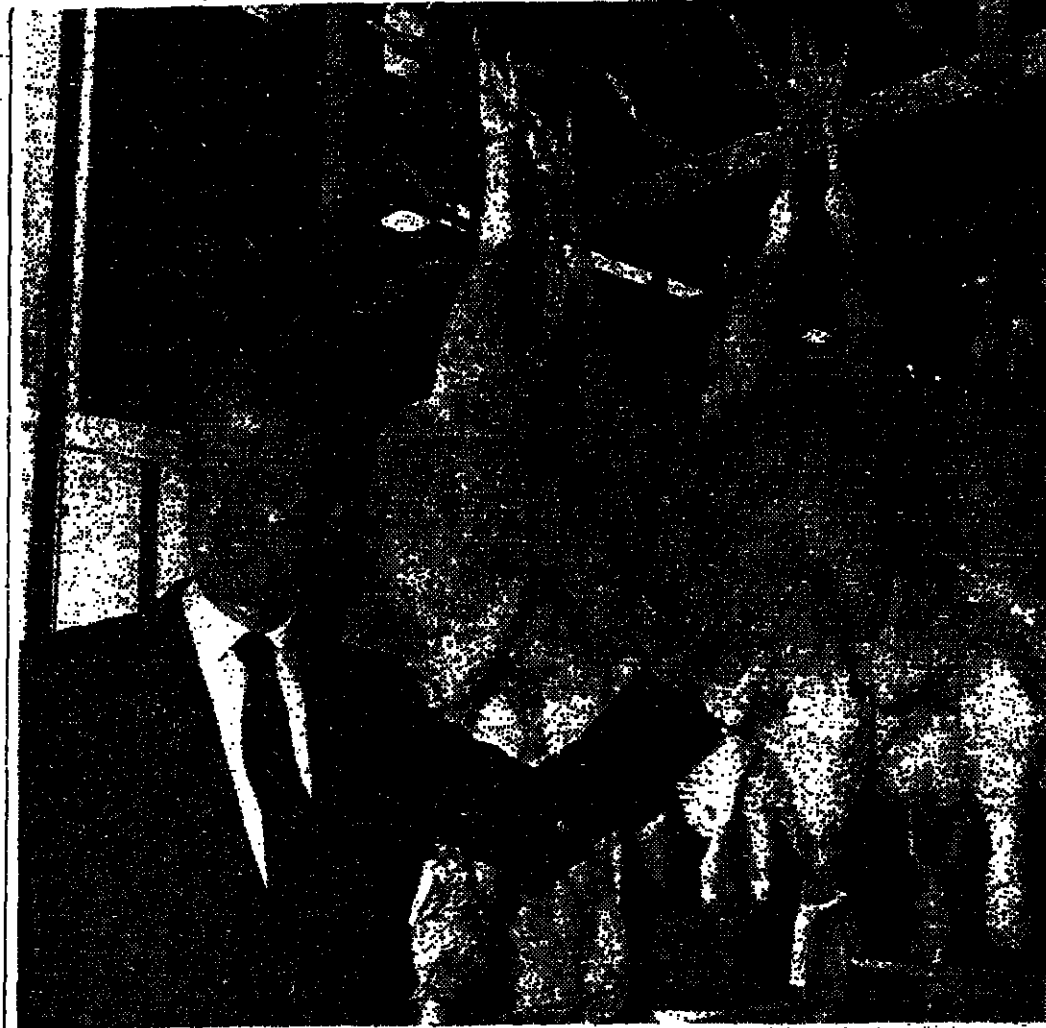
Mr Hume, who was in Dublin for talks with Mr Charles Haughey, the Irish Prime Minister, said: "I call on Mr. Atkins publicly to confirm the six points of agreement. If there is any change in this position, either before or during the conference, then we can raise the issue of the seriousness of the initiative and the reasons that lay behind it."

Stronger words came from Mr Seamus Mallon, the deputy leader of the SDLP, who said: "A duplicity which has already eroded any degree of trust that existed between him and the Northern Ireland parties" is a combination of dishonesty and incompetence. Mr Atkins had made it almost impossible for political progress to take place under his chairmanship.

The comment that upset the SDLP was contained in a letter from Mr Atkins to the Rev Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionists, who wanted assurances that there would be no talk of old-style power-sharing or Irish unity.

Mr Atkins said the conference would not be invited to discuss a united Ireland and he confirmed that the working party forming the basis of the conference would remain unaltered. Relations with the Republic of Ireland on matters over which any devolved Stormont assembly would have responsibility would be a legitimate subject for the conference to discuss, he added.

The 400-word agreement with the SDLP is an obvious refinement of the critical Paragraph Four of the working paper, which said the conference would not be concerned with the constitutional status of the province and would not be asked to discuss issues such as Irish unity, confederation or independence.



Mr Peter Walker, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, inspecting Christmas turkeys during an early morning visit to Smithfield Market, London, yesterday.

New York takes over from London as main art-auction centre

By Geraldine Norman
Sale Room Correspondent

New York has supplanted London as the world's leading art auction centre. It had been drawing closer for some time.

For the autumn season Sotheby's turnover in Bond Street was £1m down on last year at £24.9m; in New York it was £15m up at £42m.

Such figures are complicated by the vagaries of exchange rates. The New York turnover is 72 per cent up on 1978 if measured in dollars and 53 per cent up if measured in sterling. However, turnover in Bond Street is down whichever way you look at it. Elsewhere in Britain there has been a modest advance.

Sotheby's is now the biggest art auctioneer worldwide by a large margin, with a turnover of £94.3m compared with Christie's, the nearest competitor, with a turnover of £55.3m. Christie's has had a better autumn in London than Sotheby's with turnover up by 33 per cent to £21.4m. But in New York, where Christie's auction rooms are only just entering their third year of business, turnover is up to £16m

compared with £11.9m for last season.

Phillips, the third largest auction group, reports its figures by calendar year, and not for the autumn alone. But it has raised its sales to £31m for the past year, with the growth area being concentrated in the United States where turnover was up to £5.6m.

Phillips is also a relative newcomer in New York; only Sotheby's and Christie's have long been entrenched. But Bonham's, which is fourth in Britain and has no New York outlet, has managed to add a modest 6 per cent increase to its turnover this autumn.

It is exceedingly difficult to determine whether the shift in turnover from London to New York in Sotheby's and Christie's figures has been guided by the auctioneers or has happened of its own accord. Both firms advertise the fact that they will guide clients to sell in the most advantageous of their worldwide outlets.

The success of New York reflects, on one hand, the strong demand from United States collectors and dealers; and, on the other, the advice that the auc-

tioniers have given their clients that New York is the best place to sell. The two go hand in hand.

An important factor in the United States advance has been the boom in prices for all art and artefacts of American origin.

In September a nineteenth-century Arctic seascape by the American artist Frederick William Church, "Icebergs", became the third most expensive painting yet sold at auction, at \$2.5m. Only a painting by Velasquez and one by Titoretto had gone higher.

There also seems to have been a policy decision by both Sotheby's and Christie's to hold their top sales of expensive Impressionist and modern pictures in New York rather than London.

For Christie's the autumn Impressionist sales in New York totalled £4m and in London, £1.2m.

The auctioneers have to take note of where their clients prefer their goods to be sold, but they can generally persuade their clients to choose the most promising centre.

IBA's decision on television regions has shocked prospective broadcasters

By David Hewson
Industrial Staff

The Independent Broadcasting Authority has decided that there will be no major changes in the regions covered by the commercial television five counties which will fight for licences to broadcast from January, 1982.

The ruling has astounded both existing companies and the various consortia formed to challenge them during hearings for the franchises next year. It will immediately rule out the chances of success of Lancastria, the consortium which includes Mr Brian Redhead and the Duke of Westminster, and the East Midlands Forum, a group involving five county councils in the Midlands advised by Mr Philip Whitehead, MP for Derby (North) and a former BBC producer and editor.

Mr Whitehead said last night: "There will be a great deal of questioning of the IBA's interpretation of its role and its apparent subservience to the existing companies in this. When one thinks the

fourth channel is going to be put in the hands of this present organization, I am in despair."

Both groups' applications for franchises were to be based upon changing the boundaries of the companies currently serving their areas. Such changes occurred when the franchises were last offered in 1967, and consortia planning to compete in the present round have been told that 15 companies operating in the country, believed regional changes would be considered again.

The chairman of the IBA, Lady Plowden, has, however, written to the Lancastria group saying: "The national plan for television coverage of the United Kingdom does not permit the authority to carve out fresh regions in areas already covered."

An IBA spokesman last night confirmed the point, saying that the authority could not agree to changes such as those suggested by Lancastria be-

cause they would involve the construction of new transmitter equipment.

The chief executive of the Lancastria group, Mr Anthony Sutcliffe, said that lawyers had written to the IBA contesting Lady Plowden's claim that new regions could not be created.

It is also expected that questions will be tabled in the House of Commons asking Lord Heald, the Home Office minister responsible for broadcasting, to define the IBA's powers.

The ruling has been greeted with particular bitterness among members of competing consortia because it has been made before the IBA has advertised for applications for the franchises. The advertisements were due to appear this month, but are now likely to be delayed until January. Contracts are due to be awarded next winter.

The IBA spokesman said: "We feel we are working within the meaning of the Broadcasting Act."

Adult education council to last until 1983

By Our Education
Correspondent

The Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education, whose chairman is Dr Richard Hoggart, is to be allowed to continue for a further three years after its present three-year office expires in October, 1980.

In a letter to Dr Hoggart, Mr Mark Carlisle, Secretary of State for Education and Science, said that he had been impressed by the energy and enthusiasm with which the council had tackled a daunting task.

He recognized that the council had only just begun to make an impact on its two main tasks: the review of current practice and of how most effectively to use resources; and the re-evaluation of provision prior to the period of six years, and did not force a need for it to continue after October, 1983.

The council has an annual budget of £22,000.

Storms put Radio Four transmitter out of action

Radio Four will stay off the air for many listeners in England and Wales until at least tomorrow as engineers try to repair a storm-damaged transmitter.

The 700-foot high aerial at Droitwich, near Birmingham, was damaged in Monday's 90mph gales. The BBC said aerials were designed to withstand high winds but a prolonged bad weather had been too much for it. "The stress on the aerial over that period was enormous—the worst weather for decades," they said.

Radio Four can still be heard on VHF and in the South-west, London, Newcastle, Carlisle and Northern Ireland areas served by local medium wave stations.

Stairmoor Pass on the A66 road between Penrith and Scotch Corner in Cumbria, yesterday, stranding a line of lorries a mile long.

High winds caused drifts and police stopped all heavy traffic while snowploughs battled for two hours to reopen the road. It was later described as passing with care. More snow was predicted in the next 24 hours.

Traffic was back to normal on the M6 in Cumbria after high winds on Monday had left

almost 400 lorries stranded at the motorway service area at Southwaite.

A helicopter began airlifting more than 100 tons of feed to 60 remote sheep farms high in the Lake District fells.

In Northamptonshire, a motorcyclist, Mr Philip Richard Emmerson, aged 20, of Banbury, Oxfordshire, was blown off his machine and found with head injuries at the top of a hill near Middleton Cheney. He died later.

Shipping and coastguards along the south coast are searching for a missing coaster, the St Ann of Alderney, 300 tons, which was last heard of at 1 am on Monday, passing the Hook of Holland bound for Exmouth, Devon.

In the past 36 hours severe storms have swept the channel. More than 20 large ships sheltered off Torbay.

In the English Channel the search has been called off for two French trawlers lost in the violent storms.

Bristol Channel coastguards are watching for a dozen 45-gallon drums of highly inflammable and poisonous chemical which were lost overboard from a Kuwaiti vessel off St Ann's Head, South Wales. The blue drums are labelled Basrah.

Police wait for Wormwood Scrubs inquiry

By Peter Evans
Home Affairs Correspondent

Scotland Yard is likely to wait for an official Prison Department inquiry before deciding whether to investigate allegations that criminal offences took place at Wormwood Scrubs prison on August 31.

Scotland Yard confirmed last night that no correspondence had been received from George E. Baker and Co., a firm of solicitors in Guildford, and that a reply had been sent. "We are not prepared to discuss the nature of our reply," the Yard said.

The allegations were raised at a meeting on Monday night held by the Howard League for Penal Reform, in a protest by the league that voluntary workers at Wormwood Scrubs had been dismissed for speaking out over use of the M4 squad, prison officers in riot gear trained in "Minimum Use of Force Tactical Intervention".

During the incident 54 prisoners and 11 prison officers were injured.

Tighter licence system to save mackerel stocks

By Our Agricultural
Correspondent

Strict new curbs to protect the lucrative mackerel fishery from the depletion that has hit the herring, were announced by the Government yesterday.

Mr Allick Buchanan-Smith, Minister of State at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, told reporters in London: "We mean business in relation to the conservation of our stock."

With an annual catch in home waters of more than 300,000 tons, mackerel now represents Britain's main sea fishery. Mr Buchanan-Smith said that the fishery was under threat from the west of Britain would be cut by a fifth at the end of this month and that fishing of mackerel by all but the smallest boats must stop in mid-February.

Next year a tougher licensing system will be introduced to discourage excessive fishing by large trawlers and boats from abroad which are registered in Britain to take advantage of the plentiful supply of mackerel. Such registering was

"perfectly correct," the minister said.

The Government had told the EEC about its new measures, but considered them part of a purely British conservation policy in the absence of an agreed EEC fish policy, Mr Buchanan-Smith said.

"If we go on at the present pace the mackerel stock will be even more at risk," he said. "The step we have announced today is improving our ability to husband that resource."

He believed the cut in quotas would be "pretty serious for some of the bigger vessels".

Mackerel is profitable because there is strong demand for the fish and because prices are supported by the apparatus of the Common Agricultural Policy.

The ministry said yesterday that more than two thirds of the mackerel caught off south-west England so far this winter had been sold to 35 foreign processing vessels waiting outside British inshore waters. Twelve of those boats were from the Soviet Union and 10 from Bulgaria.

Boy 'partly blinded by eclipse of sun'

Ralph Gifford, a boy of 15, was partly blinded, through viewing an eclipse of the sun, during a geography lesson, Mr Justice Caudley was told in the High Court yesterday.

The boy, who is now 19, looked at the eclipse through a smoked glass filter handed to him by his geography teacher at Napier Road School, Gillingham, Kent, in 1976, Mr Keith Topley, his counsel, said. A few weeks later, he realised that bright light was causing difficulties.

It was discovered that he had suffered a burning injury to the retina of his right eye. The condition was permanent and untreatable, Mr Topley added.

Mr Gifford, of Beechwood Avenue, Rochester, an apprentice machinist at Chatham docks, sued Kent County Council, as education authority, for damages.

The council denied liability and claimed that any injury he received was due to his own negligence in looking through one filter and not two as instructed.

The hearing was adjourned until January 21 to enable both sides to call expert evidence about filters.

Police files study dispels fallacies of rape

By David Nicholson-Lord

Several commonly held beliefs about rape have been challenged in what is believed to be the first large-scale survey to be conducted in Britain. Rape cases based on police files.

It was carried out by Richard Wright, a research student at the Institute of Criminology at Cambridge. Findings were presented yesterday to a symposium on rape at a British Psychological Society conference in London.

Other papers included results of research into the personalities of violent rapists, and the law's attitude to rape. Mr Wright began with the results of research into the personalities of violent rapists, and the law's attitude to rape. Mr Wright began with the results of research into the personalities of violent rapists, and the law's attitude to rape.

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Provincial journalists vote 3-1 against pay offer of 14½%

By Donald MacIntyre
Labour Reporter

Negotiators for the National Union of Journalists will meet the Newspaper Society this morning following the rejection by a three-to-one majority of the union's provincial members of an offer which would add, according to NUJ estimates, 14½ per cent in the wage bill in regional newspapers.

The society, which has so far emphasised that its offer is a final one, has a policy unlike that of many industrial employers of not backtracking annual pay awards if negotiations run beyond the normal settlement date of January 1. If the employers fail to improve their offer today, the union will have to decide its next step in some haste.

Unless there is a settlement the union is expected to convene a meeting of chapel (office branch) representatives next week which could ask meetings of members in the following few days to consider sanctions in support of the union's 30 per cent pay claim.

There is little evidence that the NUJ's provincial members are ready to repeat their strike of last winter. But NUJ leaders point to the decisive rejection of the offer, which would add between £12 and £16 per week to basic rates for senior journalists, as evidence that

the sense of grievance among regional journalists about their pay position, relative to other groups inside and outside the industry, is still deeply felt.

Many Fleet Street journalists remember their translation from the provinces to national newspapers as affording them one of the biggest pay increases in their career. When the NS and the non-TUC affiliated Institute of Journalists made a joint case last year for "special case" treatment by the Department of Employment they noted that a provincial journalist moving to Fleet Street in 1971 would have expected a 22 per cent increase in pay. By late 1978 that increase had doubled to 44 per cent.

That submission was made before the January, 1979, settlement which followed last winter's strike. Union estimates are that the settlement added 14½ per cent to average earnings and 16 to 17 per cent to basic rates. The employers say that, with topping up by local deals, resulted in an average increase of 18 per cent between 1978 and 1979. The NUJ, however, has widened the gap. Admitting that the calculation is rough,

the union claims that the overall average in the provinces is about £5,000 a year compared with their estimate of £10,000 in Fleet Street.

NUJ discontent has been further fuelled by comparison with some settlements reached with other workers in provincial newspapers.

The union lost no time in exploiting by publication in The Journalist a memorandum circulated within the management of Thomson Regional Newspapers, one of the four big groups in the field which together account for perhaps a third of the 9,000 journalists in provincial newspapers.

It indicated that between September, 1978, and June, 1979, journalists' earnings had risen by £17 per week to £117 compared with rises of £40 to £155 for process workers in the Society of Lithographic Artists Designers and Engravers, and by £57 to £177 for members of the National Graphical Association.

The senior average rate for journalists is £106 per week compared with £100 for that of firmen with which provincial reporters often deal in their daily routine work.

(trainees or those prevented from leaving their papers because they are indentured).

The estimated average earnings for the industry's 1935 juniors in 1979 is £50.13, below the average manual wage. The NUJ have repeatedly argued that the juniors create a pool of cheap labour for smaller weekly newspapers whose reporting staffs, the union claims, sometimes entirely consist of trainees.

Juniors, the union argues, form the most militant section of the union, partly because they are bitter at doing the work of qualified journalists at lower rates, and partly because in some smaller offices they are most likely to be chapel fathers (shop stewards) because their qualified colleagues move away so fast.

Equally, the NUJ has argued that a lack of an incremental scale "forces qualified journalists who have most to offer to provincial newspapers into what it claims are better paid jobs not only in Fleet Street but in radio, television and the press, and outside the industry."

Parliament, December 18, 1979

Britain to go for pressurized water reactor if safety hurdle is cleared

of Commons
government has made clear to
nuclear and electricity supply
industry its wish that the pressurized water reactor should be the nuclear power station of the future. The aim of starting construction in 1982, Mr David Howell, Secretary of State for Energy, said in a statement on the nuclear programme.

commented during questions that the nuclear power station had a magnificent safety record.

Howell said: Safe nuclear and a strong nuclear industry are essential to the country's energy policy. On the prospects, supplies of sea oil and gas will be in the 1980s. Even with exploitation of coal and oil, and with great efforts on nuclear energy sources, it will be difficult to meet the country's long-term needs without a sizeable contribution from nuclear power.

British nuclear power has been in decline over the last decade and the structure of the nuclear industry has been under review for nearly two years. It is now time to reverse this trend and to ensure that the industry is on a footing we must act now.

Government has therefore entered into negotiations with the industry to ensure that there must be a secure and reliable source of nuclear power to be secured and current uncertainties are to be removed.

Government authorized the Nuclear Electric Generating and the South of Scotland Electricity Board to begin work at this time to build a new pressurized water reactor each as soon as possible.

Government also

endorsed the intention of the Government to establish a pressurized water reactor as a valid option for the nuclear power station. The Government's policy is to build a pressurized water reactor, which is a safe, reliable, and efficient source of energy. The Government's policy is to build a pressurized water reactor, which is a safe, reliable, and efficient source of energy.

in consultation with the CEBG the NNC will prepare the safety case for the board to consider and submit to the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate. Statutory consent actually to build the station will also be needed and an inquiry will be held in due course.

We attach overriding importance to the safety of nuclear power and will want to ensure that the lessons of the Three Mile Island station in the United States have been learnt. I am today publishing a report on the Three Mile Island station to the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate and other authorities in the United Kingdom.

Looking ahead, the electricity supply industry has advised that it would need to order at least one new nuclear power station a year from the late 1980s to a programme of the order of 15,000

megawatts over 10 years. The precise level of future ordering will depend upon the development of the electricity demand and the performance of the industry, but we consider this a reasonable prospect against which the nuclear and power plant industries can plan. The Government's policy is to build a pressurized water reactor, which is a safe, reliable, and efficient source of energy.

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The immediate task of the NNC is to forward their work on the AGR programme, including early commissioning of the remainder of the first AGR, and to complete work on a PWR design, ready for safety scrutiny. In addition it is the Government's wish that the company should be able to support it in this role.

The company may also wish to consider moving into some areas of manufacturing in due course.

The future success of our nuclear programme is of great importance to the prosperity and the security of this country. I ask all concerned to give their active support to the decisions which I have announced.

Mr David Owen, Chief Opposition spokesman on energy (Flynn, Devonport, Lab)—Safety of nuclear power is the overriding factor. Having authorized two gas-cooled reactors this year, we must continue to support a steady ordering programme of AGRs provided this is adjusted to match realistic energy demand forecasts and that it is accompanied by increased investment in the expansion of the coal mining industry.

We welcome the announcement on the single firm management of the nuclear power industry. The management agreement with GEC can be assured that any new nuclear power station will be generated, accepted, and associated, therefore, with any major shareholders.

It would be a good idea to have a technical agreement as possible between the parties over the energy industries and energy policy. The Government's policy is to build a pressurized water reactor, which is a safe, reliable, and efficient source of energy.

Will the Government ensure that the inquiry will be held in due course? Will the Government ensure that the inquiry will be held in due course? Will the Government ensure that the inquiry will be held in due course?

Mr Howell—I confirm that. This is a very safe industry with a magnificent safety record; safety is paramount.

Mr Wedgwood Benn (Bristol, South-East, Lab)—Will the minister confirm that what he has announced is a public expenditure commitment of £10,000m to £20,000m, five times as great as the existing programme in the last decade and different from what the generating board sought as late as the beginning of last year?

Has the Government abandoned the gas-cooled reactor, of which we have had 22 years' experience, for this programme? If so, it would have been more honest to say that the Government had decided that it wants the PWR, whether or not there is a fault-testing system for the gas-cooled reactor on the scale. The German courts have stopped work there until that is established.

We should have a debate and vote, as on Windcatcher, before the programme goes ahead. With a crash programme on this scale, with American reactors not tried in this country and now suspected of power industry into the heart of public controversy after public confidence in the system which has been developed and tried and which worked well here.

Mr Howell—I know Mr Benn's experience, but in using the expression "crash programme" he has misheard what I said. This represents 22,000 megawatts of electricity generating capacity for short of the sort of level of 40,000 megawatts at the end of 10 years outlined in Mr Benn's Green Paper, published when he was Secretary of State.

This is a complex matter which we must pursue in a cautious and prudent manner, but pursue it we

must. Until we have safety clearance, and have not over that hurdle, it is impossible to make a commitment to a different reactor system, even if we wished to.

The aim must be to see whether we can build the PWR and get safety clearance. If we can, we can make a decision on which reactor to adopt for the limited programme I have outlined.

On the storage of waste, new forms, through vitrification, are being developed, but it would be misleading to assume that present problems of storage of high level and high activity waste are easily managed.

What we want improvements through vitrification and have a need for that in 15 to 20 years, it would be misleading to indicate that we have an immediate problem which needed an immediate solution. We do not have an immediate problem.

Mr David Pegg (Truro, Lib)—How can the minister justify the Government's obsession with nuclear power? After the Three Mile Island incident, the colossal leak at Windscale and the extraordinarily slow progress of the research programme on disposal of nuclear waste and the American halt to any development of their industry, it would make more sense to wait until we have had an inquiry into the PWR and methods of storing and disposing of nuclear waste before we decide to build a new nuclear power station.

Mr Howell—The word "obsession" is misplaced. We are concerned with building up to 30 per cent of electricity capacity from nuclear power, leaving a variety of sources for power, light and heat in future. What we are concerned about is the safety of nuclear power and the safety of nuclear power and the safety of nuclear power.

Mr Nigel Forster (Sutton, Conser, C)—Will he assure us that the high cost of the programme he has announced will not exclude adequate investment by this and future governments in energy conservation and renewable sources of energy?

Mr Howell—I can give any such indication because, until we have safety clearance for the PWR, we cannot make any commitment about the size for it. He says there is widespread concern about nuclear power. I recognize that fully, and for that reason have authorized publication of the evaluation of the Kennedy report by the CEBG. What went wrong at Harrisburg had much to do with procedures and much less to do with the integrity of the PWR.

Mr Maurice Macmillan (Farnham, C) congratulated the minister on reaching a fairly quick decision, but regretted that he had not mentioned the future of the fast breeder reactor.

Mr Howell—I expect a full report on the Kennedy report from the Energy Authority fairly soon on how we can best proceed towards a commercial demonstration of the fast breeder reactor. I expect, too, a report on the possibility of international collaboration, including that with the French and with France and Germany.

Reconciliation in Rhodesia the m: Government to instruct Lord Soames to confer amnesty

Government intended to Lord Soames, Governor of Rhodesia, to confer amnesty on all those who committed good faith by both sides, Lord Soames, Lord Privy Seal and Lord Amherst, C, said.

at the constitutional conference (the said) have now the final agreement reached. Formal signature of the re- of the ceasefire agree- will take place within the no days, conference has thus reached agreement. The Government the spirit of compromise by all the parties to the negotiation and to other governments, it is also right to congratulate the Government on its success in this agreement which many thought was impossible.

House will wish to know the light of the requirement for a monitoring presence need for self-sufficiency and air to be maintained in Rhodesia, the latest estimate for the pre-independence census is 2.2m.

re interests of reconciliation a settlement, the Government intends to instruct the Governor to confer an amnesty on all those who committed good faith by both sides.

ough many problems still lie in the way, the successful conclusion of the Lancaster House conference opens the prospect of a new era of peace and stability in Rhodesia. The Government will be fully adequate for the Patriotic Front forces.

The question of additional places will only come up if the Patriotic Front forces assemble with their arms and equipment in numbers greater than can be dealt with. All the parties designated in the ceasefire agreement. We do not expect this situation to arise. If it does, we will deal with it.

Mr Andrew Fairbridge (Warley, East, Lab)—We pray that fair and free elections will crown these peace negotiations for an independent and democratic Zimbabwe.

Sir Ian Gilmour—I must stress that the success of this agreement and the peace in Rhodesia is the exact compliance with what has been agreed at Lancaster House. That is vital. There must be compliance with the ceasefire agreement. The spirit of reconciliation and compromise engendered by the ceasefire agreement becomes independent if it is to avoid the kind of problems it has been through in the last 15 years.

Sir Ian Gilmour—We have stressed throughout the Lancaster House conference that the aim of everybody in Rhodesia. There must be a spirit of compromise. Nobody will win what the peace and prosperity of Rhodesia, unless there is full and complete compliance with what has been agreed.

Mr Robert Hughes (Aberdeen, North, Lab)—The period between now and the election is crucial to make sure that the agreement is fully implemented. What action has the Government taken to make certain that South African troops remain out of Rhodesia at the earliest opportunity?

What arrangements have been made to have proper accounting of the ceasefire? The press has widespread reports in the press that South African commercial interests are intent on support of the Patriotic Front forces. We made it clear that we do not contemplate any kind of purge of the personnel of the forces of either side. It is impossible to go to the forces of either side to say that this man is a South African, or on the Patriotic side that this man is a South African. There will be no foreign intervention in this election.

I agree that the next few weeks and months will be crucial. I confirm that as soon as the ceasefire agreement has been signed, Zanu and Zapu will be fully legalized.

Mr Hugh Dryden (Harrow, East, C)—Can he clarify the meaning of the ceasefire agreement and the meaning of the ceasefire agreement and the meaning of the ceasefire agreement?

Sir Ian Gilmour—I did not say that. I said that the ceasefire agreement was a ceasefire agreement. I said that the ceasefire agreement was a ceasefire agreement. I said that the ceasefire agreement was a ceasefire agreement.

Mr Ian Lloyd (Havant and Waterloo, C)—The economic reconstruction is needed in Rhodesia. It is a major contributor to that is bound to be South Africa.

Sir Ian Gilmour—Economic reconstruction must follow these peace negotiations. It was in Brussels today and did mention there was scope for Community help for Rhodesia. I hope that will be forthcoming.

Mr Richard Alexander (Newark, C)—Could he indicate the proposed timetable for withdrawal of power and influence by the Government?

Sir Ian Gilmour—The ceasefire will begin to run from the signing of the agreement. The ceasefire will begin to run from the signing of the agreement. The ceasefire will begin to run from the signing of the agreement.

Mr Michael Brotherton (Louth, C)—What steps will be taken to limit Soviet influence in Rhodesia and in particular the use of Soviet money in the forthcoming elections?

Sir Ian Gilmour—I can imagine no greater contribution to limiting Soviet influence in Rhodesia than the ceasefire agreement. I can imagine no greater contribution to limiting Soviet influence in Rhodesia than the ceasefire agreement. I can imagine no greater contribution to limiting Soviet influence in Rhodesia than the ceasefire agreement.

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Lord Stratford and Mount Royal, Minister of State for Defence, the Government sought to avoid a nuclear conflict by removing the temptation to try to score an easy victory over this country without fear of retribution. It did not want to engage in an arms race.

We are seeking (he said) to ensure the greatest degree of security at the lowest possible level of arms compatible with that security.

A realist has to recognize that the search for security involves the maintenance of a balance of forces between east and west and the promotion of a stable relationship of that stable relationship.

The defence policy was designed to preserve peace. They needed to have the capability to respond to the whole spectrum of threats—conventional, nuclear and strategic nuclear.

The debate was concluded.

The Police Negotiating Board Bill, establishing on a statutory basis the police negotiating machinery recommended in the Edmund Davies report, was read a second time.

The European Communities (Greek Accession) Bill and the Hypnotism Bill were read a third time and passed.

A Bill to make further provision as regards criminal justice in Scotland was introduced and read a first time.

House adjourned, 5.13 pm.

Policy emerging of flat rate charge for school transport

It was no desire of the Government to put down by Labour (the said) the effect not only that there will be no attempt to withdraw free school transport for the over 16s, but that we shall be moving towards free transport for all school children up to the age of 16.

Mr Carlisle—I do not accept that. The provision of free school transport is rapidly increasing in cost. If we had taken no action, it would have cost £125m this coming year alone.

The vast majority of parents already do not receive free transport for their children. It is reasonable that those provided with school transport should pay some of the cost towards that transport.

Mr Hilary Miller (Bromsgrove and Redditch, C)—I would be concerned to ensure that the denominational schools are not treated any worse than state schools. Removal of the statutory right to free transport is a serious matter, allowing parents living under the three mile limit to take part in the system of free transport.

Mr Carlisle—That is the effect if local authorities have the right to provide transport and the right to provide if they wish. It is no desire of the Government that those powers should be used in any way to penalise those attending denominational schools and I should be

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important to make it in these weeks ahead. Mr Neil Macfarlane, Under Secretary for Education and Science, said—in 1973-74 local education authorities spent on home to school transport was about £130m in England and Wales.

It is the Government's intention that the total cost should be transferred to parents. The modest average that fare needed to achieve that savings next year set out in the white paper is between 10 and 15 pence for a single journey.

Mr John Farr (Harrowborough, C)—The Government's proposals would make the cost of school transport heavily on children from rural areas (Lancashire, C). He should consider this point and see if some sort of alleviation of the financial burden could be made during the passage of the Bill.

Mr Macfarlane—The committee on school transport is continuing to consider all aspects of the problem. At the moment, the indications are that local authorities are beginning to adopt the policy of charging a flat rate. The Department is monitoring the reports from local authorities, which indicate that the flat rate charge is now going to be applied. This will all be kept under review.

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Removing temptation of easy win

of Lords
should remain strong and its own nuclear deterrent, said of Kimberley (C) said he opened a debate on the subject. They must be prepared, he said, for the worst possible situation.

Mr Carlisle—I agree it is important to keep up the momentum of this what we aim to do, of the future defence programme, that will end as soon as an agreement has been made with the Soviet Union.

Mr Robert Hughes (Aberdeen, North, Lab)—The period between now and the election is crucial to make sure that the agreement is fully implemented. What action has the Government taken to make certain that South African troops remain out of Rhodesia at the earliest opportunity?

Sir Ian Gilmour—I can imagine no greater contribution to limiting Soviet influence in Rhodesia than the ceasefire agreement. I can imagine no greater contribution to limiting Soviet influence in Rhodesia than the ceasefire agreement. I can imagine no greater contribution to limiting Soviet influence in Rhodesia than the ceasefire agreement.

or any conceivable military purpose.

The Government's first task, before the ceasefire, was to give the power and influence to ensuring that the proposals for total nuclear disarmament were accepted. Lord Carver said it would be in the interests of the defence of this country to ensure a large scale of the future defence programme to a weapons system for which the justification was political disarmament.

Lord Oxborough (C) said the ceasefire programme on the nuclear deterrent on December 3 was stated in the selection of subjects and personnel. Some of the statements were totally untrue. The programme had become biased, predictable and heavily loaded. In recent months it had become anti-American and anti-Nato.

Lord Oxborough said that since Mr Ian Trovman, the director general, had been away after suffering a heart attack, there had been a drift away from the objective and balance which was the BBC's tradition.

Perhaps one might say (he added) that when the city's away, the programme is not the BBC's.

Lord Peart, leader of the Opposition, said he was beginning to think that the country could not afford a nuclear deterrent. They were going through a period when they would have to re-think and reconsider.

He believed in defence but in the long run they would have to come

to terms and have an agreement with the Soviet Union.

Lord Stratford and Mount Royal, Minister of State for Defence, the Government sought to avoid a nuclear conflict by removing the temptation to try to score an easy victory over this country without fear of retribution. It did not want to engage in an arms race.

We are seeking (he said) to ensure the greatest degree of security at the lowest possible level of arms compatible with that security.

A realist has to recognize that the search for security involves the maintenance of a balance of forces between east and west and the promotion of a stable relationship of that stable relationship.

The defence policy was designed to preserve peace. They needed to have the capability to respond to the whole spectrum of threats—conventional, nuclear and strategic nuclear.

The debate was concluded.

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A Bill to make further provision as regards criminal justice in Scotland was introduced and read a first time.

House adjourned, 5.13 pm.

Labour MP's call for Treasury Minister's transfer rejected

Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Industry, had acted constitutionally and with great propriety in his appointment of the chairman of Rolls-Royce and the recent resignation of the chairman of Rolls-Royce and the recent resignation of the chairman of Rolls-Royce.

Mr Carlisle—I do not accept that. The provision of free school transport is rapidly increasing in cost. If we had taken no action, it would have cost £125m this coming year alone.

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Mr Carlisle—That is the effect if local authorities have the right to provide transport and the right to provide if they wish. It is no desire of the Government that those powers should be used in any way to penalise those attending denominational schools and I should be

At the Treasury Mr Rees dealt with case work and policy for the Inland Revenue, who were about to start work on the most detailed investigation of possible tax evasion since they were set up.

How could the Inland Revenue investigators do their work properly, impartially and in detail if the Minister was not interested. The charge of the Inland Revenue was someone whose papers they would be looking at and someone they would be interviewing. It was in the public interest that the Minister should be looking at and someone they would be interviewing.

The position of Mr Rees as minister in charge of the Inland Revenue was a serious matter. The Minister should be looking at and someone they would be interviewing.

Mr Michael Meacher (Oldham, West, Lab) said the House should debate the issues raised by the mounting evidence of death and serious violence sustained by prisoners in police custody.

Home Office statistics showed that in England and Wales 143 people had died since 1970 through non-natural causes whilst in police custody.

In some cases inquests had not been held into deaths and where inquests were held the procedure was unsatisfactory. It was not possible to cross-examine witnesses.

For the sake of the police the full facts needed to be investigated. Until that happened public confidence would not be restored.

The Secretary should set up an inquiry which should examine setting up experimental panels of officers with the right of access to police stations, with the minimum of notice, to take statements from prisoners alleging police violence.

It should review the present powers of police committees and examine the fulfilment of the present police committee procedure.

Mr Stuart Holland (Lambeth, Vauxhall, Lab) said Mr Peter Daly, a former commander, had been in prison for 16 months without charge was lined up when others failed in a manner hardly appropriate to the gravity of the charges or the practice of British justice as it was allegedly recognized and known.

Mr Daly had moved from one prison to another without initial explanation to his family, his lawyer or to himself as an MP.

As Mr Daly had been given a public inquiry into police corruption and not given evidence there was, prima facie, a reason for thinking that he had been misled.

It had been put to him (Mr Holland) that it was quite possible that certain police officers who stood to lose from the Countryside inquiry might be seeking to intimidate Mr Daly, a matter of grave public concern.

Mr Michael Foot, deputy leader of the Labour Party (Edwin Vale, Lab) said the Secretary of State for Industry should come to the House to comment on the serious accusations that had been made against Mr Daly.

Mr Foot said that Mr Peter Rees could not be allowed to rest. Perhaps the Prime Minister should make a statement about it on the subject of police corruption.

290 building societies registered

Mr Nigel Lawson, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, in a written reply, said that the number of building societies currently registered with the Registry of Friendly Societies under the Building Societies Act 1962 was 290.

The total number of the directors of these societies (the added) was 1,575. The number of the directors of these societies (the added) was 1,575. The number of the directors of these societies (the added) was 1,575.

Mr Norman St John-Stevens, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Leader of the House, said Mr Kaufman had made a fallacious statement and that the House should be aware of the facts.

It was for Sir Keith Joseph to reply in detail about the meetings with the chairman of Rolls-Royce but he had in fact accepted the resignation of Sir Kenneth Keith.

The memorandum of understanding between the Government and the British Steel Corporation was to return to profitability and to ensure that the Government was not a public corporation and there was no way such document should bind the Secretary of State who was not a party to it.

The board of Rolls-Royce had decided today that Sir Frank Macfarlane should succeed Sir Kenneth as chairman.

The object of the British Steel Corporation was to return to profitability and to ensure that the Government was not a public corporation and there was no way such document should bind the Secretary of State who was not a party to it.

There was no inconsistency between having exercised a professional career in that area and his military responsibilities.

As to the specific mention of Rosminster, the Revenue department had not consulted Treasury ministers on individual cases.

The Home Secretary had already written to Mr Holland about the treatment of Mr Daly and the reasons for his transfer from Brixton prison. The Lord Chancellor had also written to him concerning the transfer.

If Mr Daly or Mr Holland (the continued) has any complaint about his treatment by the police, in the context of Operation Coupry or otherwise, the proper course is for him to bring it to the notice of the chief officer of the police concerned, who will arrange for it to be investigated in accordance with the procedures prescribed by Parliament.

The motion was agreed to.

New MP

Mr Richard Page, Conservative victor in the South-West Herefordshire constituency last week, took his seat.

Parliamentary notices

House of Commons

Health Services Bill, second reading.

House of Lords

Health Services Bill, second reading.

Health Services Bill, second reading.

Don't miss The Listener Double Christmas Number!

This special holiday issue includes:-

- ★ Science in the Seventies: Gordon Rattray Taylor looks back over science progress—from man on the moon to the silicon chip.
- ★ Trotsky: a portrait by Alec Nove, with contributions from those who shared Trotsky's years in exile. (From BBC tv).
- ★ Langham Diary by Malcolm Muggeridge.
- ★ The ITMA file: the extraordinary story of the BBC's relationship with the creators of the wartime show.
- ★ 'Hunting the Philistines': Sir Harold Acton recalls his contemporaries at Eton and Oxford, and his years in China.
- ★ Rock Review: John Peel writes about the best rock music of the year.
- ★ A new short story by Beryl Bainbridge.

The Listener

Double Christmas Number

On sale from 19 December. 60p

WEST EUROPE

Slimming doctor is jailed for two years and ordered to pay £55,000 damages after girl's death

From Ian Murray
Paris, Dec 18

The court in Clermont-Ferrand yesterday listened in horror to the story of the unnecessary death of a young university student, Mlle Frédérique Brun.

After hearing details of the treatment she had been receiving for slimming, the court sentenced her specialist to two years' imprisonment with a fine of 50,000 francs (£3,333), the maximum penalty possible under the law—and ordered him to pay 500,000 francs damages to her family.

The trial was described as a test case of the Dr Jekylls of all breeds who practice such a trade, by M. Jean-Marie Rousseau, the public prosecutor. He demanded the maximum penalty for the specialist, Dr Pierre-Marie Painvin.

Dr Painvin intends to appeal against his sentence for manslaughter. He was not present during the hearing, having sent a letter saying he was "conscientious" but the court ruled that this was merely an attempt at wasting time. Because of this, under French law, defence lawyers were not allowed to plead. A warrant for his arrest was issued.

The dead girl's mother, Mme Martine Brun, told the court that she had been recommended by a friend to see Dr Painvin in 1975 when she wanted to lose weight. She had, however, given up the treatment he prescribed for her rather quickly and had soon gone back to the 155 stone she weighed beforehand.

The following year she sent her daughter, a student of English in Montluçon, to see Dr Painvin in his Paris surgery. Mlle Brun was only 11 and weighed nearly 11 stone and she was determined to try to avoid becoming as stout as her mother. She accordingly followed the doctor's orders very carefully, with the result that she died.

The girl was apparently given the usual form of consultation by the doctor. First she was given an electrocardiogram, then a 15-minute interview with the doctor. He gave her a prescription which had to be taken to a special chemist at Seine-Saint-Denis, where she was issued with capsules.

Between October, 1976, and the beginning of February, 1977, she lost just over two stones but still had not reached the target figure set by the doctor. He accordingly gave her a new prescription for stronger tablets. On February 15 she became so ill that her parents called the family doctor. Taken to hospital, she failed to respond to any treatment and died.

The post mortem examination showed that she had been taking massive doses of thyroxine—a thyroid gland extract—mixed with strong amphetamines and diuretics in the capsules. The effect was to upset her thyroid gland, provoking a mechanical loss of weight, but ultimately causing heart failure.

Mme Brun told the court how she had watched her daughter becoming more and more ill, with dark purple patches spreading across her

face. She became extremely irritable and had temper tantrums.

According to the prosecutor this case was the best documented one, but there had been many others where patients following Dr Painvin's treatment had become extremely ill. In one case a woman had lost 9lb overnight with near fatal consequences.

Nevertheless, he said, the doctor had made a real fortune since leaving general practice in order to specialize in 1971. Operating from his surgery in Boulevard Flandrin, with its telex machine, seven outside telephone lines and a team of three doctors, he was never short of clients prepared to pay him up to 350 francs for a 15-minute interview.

M. Rousseau calculated that the doctor had made an average of 10,000 francs a day and probably something like 20m francs since 1971. Even so he appears to have paid very little tax and has already been convicted of fiscal fraud and of swindling the social security.

The Ordre des Médécins, which is the controlling body for French doctors, suspended Dr Painvin from practising for three years from the beginning of this month, after the death of another of his patients, an overweight lorry driver.

The prosecutor criticized the Order for being too slow to discipline Dr Painvin. Nevertheless, the Order sought and was granted one franc nominal damages against the doctor for "discrediting medical practice".

No response to Spanish plea on EEC entry talks

From Our Own Correspondent
Brussels, Dec 18

EEC foreign ministers declined to respond here today to a Spanish plea that the negotiations on Spain's application to join the Community should be concluded in the near future by the end of next year.

Sir Ian Gilmour, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, and his EEC colleagues listened politely to the request from Señor Calvo Sotelo, Spain's minister in charge of relations with the Nine, but offered no comment.

Señor Sotelo said that Spain would like the main points in dispute between the two sides to be clarified during the first half of 1980 and appropriate solutions to be agreed by the end of the year. This would open the way for signature of an accession treaty during 1981.

Norwegian crisis resolved

From Our Correspondent
Oslo, Dec 18

The week-long political crisis which threatened to topple Norway's minority Labour Government fizzled out today when Parliament confirmed last Sunday's vote in favour of an income policy. The Bill providing for wage restraint was passed by a majority of one.

The event is the non-Communist Government's Socialist Left which had to give ground after having secured as-

Broadcasting strike today in protest at politicians' plan to break up Norddeutscher Rundfunk

German TV network threatened

From Patricia Clough
Bonn, Dec 18

West Germany's broadcasting workers will go on strike tomorrow evening—unless stopped by a last-minute court action—in protest against plans by politicians to break up the Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR), the broadcasting corporation of the northern German state of Schleswig-Holstein.

Officially, the 8 pm to midnight strike—only the second in the history of the NDR—is about jobs. But behind it is the fear that the break-up of the NDR would mark the beginning of the end of public broadcasting here and open the way for private and commercial broadcasting with greater political control.

The future of the North German network has been in the balance since Herr Gerhard Stoltenberg, Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein—one of the three Länder it serves—saw red over its reporting of protests about a planned nuclear power-station.

The Christian Democratic politician this was the last straw after what he saw as long and consistent left-wing reporting and comment in the net-

Küng ideas 'a cause of disturbance' to minds of faithful

Continued from page 1

clerk-and-dagger action aimed at discrediting a member of their own church.

Herr Helmut Engler, the Baden-Württemberg Education Minister said Professor Küng would be offered another post at Tübingen University, and nine of the 11 professors at the theological faculty issued a statement saying: "We are shocked by this strong move by the Congregation and by this entire action. Professor Küng has said he was 'a cause of disturbance' to the minds of the faithful." The UPT report concluded, "The declaration opens by in-

sisting that the Church had 'received from God the mandate to keep and to safeguard the deposit of faith... and that theological research and teaching should always be illuminated with fidelity to the magisterium, since no one may rightly act as a theologian except in close union with the mission of teaching truth which is incumbent on the Church itself'.

Arriving at the specific issue, the Congregation's statement said some of the writings and the teaching of Professor Küng are "a cause of disturbance to the minds of the faithful". The bishops of Germany and the

Congregation had several times counselled and warned him in order to persuade him to carry on his theological work in full communion with the authentic magisterium of the Church.

After noting that some of Professor Küng's opinion were opposed to the doctrine of the church, the statement said he was warned not to teach such opinions, but he did not change his attitude. This was particularly evident concerning doubts cast on the dogma of infallibility. He was also accused of holding views in accord with the church's doctrines on the divinity of Christ and on

Five Grapo leaders tunnel out of jail

From Harry Debelius
Madrid, Dec 18

A hunt began today for five members of the left-wing extremist organization Grapo (First of October Anti-Fascist Resistance Groups) who tunneled their way out of a maximum-security prison in Zamora.

The five include at least three alleged leaders of the movement and are described by the police as "very dangerous". They took several months to dig the eight-yard escape tunnel in a corner of a bathroom, using a T-shaped piece of scrap iron and an aluminium plate.

They left the prison last night, some time between the 8 pm roll-call and the 11.30 pm bed check.

The tunnel entrance had been covered by floor tiles. The escapees apparently got rid of the earth they dug out by flushing it down the lavatories in the washroom.

Forty-eight known or suspected members of Grapo were held at Zamora prison. The officers in which the five escapees were allegedly involved included two kidnappers—that of a banker and adviser to King Juan Carlos, Señor José María Oriol, in 1976, and the president of the Military Supreme Court, General Emilio Villacueva.

"We thought the Grapo file was closed," said a police official, "but now we have to start all over again."

Authorities investigating the fatal shooting of two youths in a riot here last Thursday have found evidence suggesting some shots might have been fired from buildings near by.

OVERSEAS



Arson blamed: Mr William Hurditch, the New South Wales fire coordinator, said yesterday that arsonists started the devastating fires roaring through the wooded outskirts of Sydney. Thousands of exhausted firefighters struggled to keep the flames from residential suburbs, while a black pall of smoke hangs on the horizon (shown above).

"We know from experience when a fire has been caused by lightning or friction and when it has been deliberately lit," Mr Hurditch told reporters after flying over woodlands consumed by the worst bush fire in the area for 25 years. Raging in a broad arc, the fires have engulfed houses, cars and stables and caused one death.

The fires were brought under control last night after the wind direction changed and the temperature dropped. But a dozen separate fires still were smouldering in bushland north of the city which could become dangerous if a predicted heatwave occurs.

Bishop Muzorewa holds back on signing Rhodesia ceasefire

From Nicholas Ashford
Salisbury, Dec 18

Today it was the turn of Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the former Prime Minister, to delay the reaching of a final agreement to the Lancaster House settlement talks on Rhodesia.

The man whose party, the United African National Council (UANC), has for the past few years been accused of being a front of deliberately dragging out the Lancaster House conference, today announced he would not be returning to London to take part in a formal signing ceremony until he received clarification from Britain about certain concessions it is reported to have made to the Patriotic Front.

Although Bishop Muzorewa did not say which points the Government was expected to clarify, he is concerned about reports that Britain may extend the period needed to put a ceasefire into effect.

Britain now reckons it will take 14 days between the signing of the ceasefire agreement and the start of the ceasefire. Members of the Commonwealth monitoring force have taken up their positions in army camps and guerrilla assembly areas around the country. This is a far longer delay than the plan and the Rhodesians fear the period could be extended further.

Mr Robert Mugabe, co-leader of the Patriotic Front, has said it would take six to seven weeks

to prepare his forces for a ceasefire.

Bishop Muzorewa is also believed to be concerned about the number of guerrillas that will be allowed to congregate in assembly areas. British and Rhodesian estimates put the number of armed guerrillas operating inside the country at between 15,000 and 17,000, but the Patriotic Front leaders now are claiming twice that number.

In his announcement Bishop Muzorewa emphasized that it was still his earnest desire to conclude an honourable agreement as soon as possible.

Bishop Muzorewa did not attend a meeting today with Lord Soames, the British Governor of Southern Rhodesia. However Lord Soames did have his first meeting with Mr Ian Smith, the former white Prime Minister, who declined to greet the Governor when he arrived in Salisbury last week.

Lord Soames has made it clear that until there is a formal signing of the ceasefire agreement the ban on the Patriotic Front will remain in force and that he will hold back on other reforms he wants to introduce.

The Patriotic Front has only 13 days left until the December 31 deadline set by Lord Soames to register as a political party to contest next year's election. Until the ceasefire agreement is ratified the country will remain in its present limbo in which Lord Soames is Governor in name but is not prepared to act in such a way

as to justify his title. Similarly, until the agreement has been signed and sealed the airlift of the Commonwealth ceasefire monitoring force will continue to be delayed.

David Spenser, Diplomatic Correspondent writes: The Patriotic Front is looking forward to a triumphant welcome from its supporters when Mr Joshua Nkomo and Mr Mugabe, its co-leaders, return to Rhodesia from the London talks. The Patriotic Front leadership now is making election plans after its decision to accept the ceasefire.

The formal signing ceremony will probably be put off until tomorrow, depending on whether Bishop Muzorewa decides to fly back to London for it. The occasion, with Lord Carrington, as conference chairman, signing—for the British Government—is to be held in the long gallery at Lancaster House.

Mr Nkomo has indicated that the two wings of the Patriotic Front would probably fight the election as one party.

Britain is to provide about 700 men for the ceasefire monitoring force and Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Kenya, the remainder to a total of 1,200. The cost of the ceasefire operation is likely to exceed the figure of £3.5m mentioned in the Southern Rhodesia Bill, according to British officials.

Leading article, page 13
Growth in 1980, page 16
Parliamentary report, page 5

Thatcher plan for the 1980s explained

Continued from page 1

Her eight points included action to improve the economy and the economy of individual nations; to conserve energy and achieve an understanding with oil producers; to modernise defences while seeking agreements with the East; to help the developing countries to help themselves; and to assert our faith in freedom and our belief in the institutions which sustain it.

Of these, the matters she devoted most attention to concerned relations with the communist countries, which she discussed in uncompromising terms calculated to appeal to the conservatives in her audience. "The Soviet Union continues to proclaim the ideological struggle," she declared, reinforcing the point with a quotation from Lenin.

While failing to repudiate their ideological ambitions, she noted, the Russians continue to expand their forces. "We can argue about Soviet motives but the fact is that the Russians have the weapons and are getting more of them. It is simple arithmetic for the West to respond," she said.

After repeating her support and admiration for the way in which President Carter's administration has handled the Tehran hostage crisis, Mrs Thatcher delivered some general remarks about revolutionary ideology.

"I am convinced that there is little force left in the Marxist stimulus to revolution," she said. "Its impetus is petering out as the practical failures of the doctrine become more obvious... What is left is a technique of subversion and a collection of catch-phrases."

The former is still dangerous, she said. "It is a menace that needs to be fought wherever it occurs."

Mrs Thatcher arrived in New York from Washington this morning. Her visit has been well received. She achieved the quite rare distinction of being interviewed on all three network programmes this morning.

The New York Times welcomed her in a friendly editorial, calling her "the most effective British statesman since Harold Macmillan," mainly on the strength of the Rhodesia settlement. She was, the newspaper said, "no longer just a friend and ally, but an acclaimed peacemaker."

David Cross writes from Washington: "Mrs Thatcher left the American capital for New York today clearly exuberant at what, by popular consent, had been a highly successful series of meetings with President Carter and Administration and Congressional officials."

"She had greatly enjoyed her whirlwind visit to Washington, not least the marvellously warm welcome," she had been to Scotland, she said, at a breakfast press conference. Even her failure to persuade Mr Carter to approve the sale of revolvers to the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Northern Ireland appeared in not to have dampened her spirits.

'Most important job in Salisbury'

From Our Own Correspondent
Salisbury, Dec 18

A correspondent writing in the letters column of *The Herald* yesterday conjured up a wonderful picture of a hundred British town clerks, clad in bowler hats and pinstriped suits, descending on Rhodesia to supervise the country's pre-independence elections next year.

How, the writer wondered, would the town clerk of, say, Salisbury, make out in the wilds of Gona Re Zou? It was all like something out of Gilbert and Sullivan, the writer concluded, adding: "The best of British luck and mind the snakes, scorpions and mopani trees, not to mention the elephants."

Sir John Boynton, the British election commissioner, was amused by the letter but said he was rather unfair. About 70 per cent of his team of about 100 election supervisors will travel to Rhodesia next year. He had experience of election work in Africa and only 30 per cent will be taken straight from local government in Britain.

In many ways Sir John, who has a long record of senior posts in local government, has the most important portfolio in Lord Soames's governing team. The whole point of the British settlement is to allow the people of Rhodesia to choose to whom they want the British to hand over the reins of power and it is Sir John's task to ensure that the forthcoming elections are free and fair.

Sir John has several functions. He is responsible for co-ordinating the elections—he will preside over the election court which will comprise two representatives from each of the political parties taking part. He will act as a confidential ear to hear complaints of electoral malpractice during the election campaign.

He also has to make arrangements for the Commonwealth election observer team to carry out its work. There may be as many as 100 Commonwealth observers, which means that during the election period he will be in direct contact with about 200 people and in indirect contact of many hundreds more Rhodesians manning polling booths and supervising counting around the country.

Unlike the Governor's military and police advisers, Sir John does have some executive powers: "I have reserve power to direct, but I hope this is something which will not have to be exercised very often," he says.

In many respects the election will be regarded along similar lines to last April's which was widely denounced as being "unfree and unfair". Like last time there will be no registration of voters as this would be too long, and voting will be on the party list system. The poll will be spread over several days, as before, although this time, probably only over three days instead of five.

But the British are anxious that the new election should not be seen as a carbon copy of last April's.

For a start the circumstances will be different. Last April the elections were essentially a referendum on a constitution. The time all parties taking part will have agreed on the constitution. At stake this time will be the degree to which the various parties enjoy popular support.

There will be other big differences compared with last April. For instance, by the time voting takes place martial law and other emergency regulations will have been moved, political detainees released and the ban removed on Zanu and Zapu, the two political wings of the Patriotic Front.

The mass media, particularly radio and television, should provide fairer election coverage than last time. Most important of all, there should be less intimidation. If an effective ceasefire can be imposed (although no one here expects the election to be very clean).

But probably the most difficult decision is what the criteria for "free and fair" elections should be.

Our judgment must be related to the African scene and to the African elections. Sir John says: "The main thing is that we must ensure that voting is in secret, that people are confident it is in secret, and that they are assured the mechanics of the election were fair and there was no fraud."

S African jailed four years for killing black

Johannesburg, Dec 18. — A white man who stabbed a black man to death for causing a row in the servant's quarters was jailed for eight years, with four years suspended, here today.

"It is time you and people like you realized that you cannot assault a black man because he won't listen to you or won't immediately do what you tell him," Judge C. S. Margo of the Supreme Court said in passing sentence.

The accused, Johannes Adam Ziesman, aged 29, was said in court to have argued with Mr Zacharia Mkgosi after Mr Ziesman's servant asked for help in getting Mr Mkgosi and other blacks from the servant's room because they were drinking and had become rowdy.

Mr Trudeau to lead Liberals again

From John Beitz
Ottawa, Dec 18

Mr Pierre Trudeau, the former Prime Minister, today announced that he has accepted the call of the Liberal Party and will lead the party into Canada's national election in February.

It was only a month ago that Mr Trudeau, aged 60, decided to step down after 11 years as party leader.

But the Liberals did not have time to choose a successor before the Conservative Government of Mr Joe Clark was defeated on a confidence vote last Thursday.

During the weekend both the Liberal Party's parliamentary caucus and the national executive voted to ask Mr Trudeau to speed his re-election decision, and today he told a press conference that he would accede to their wishes.

"I have a duty to accept

the call of my party," he said. He coupled his announcement with a harsh attack on the record of the Conservative government in their 18 months in office, describing it as one of "promises abandoned" and "denouncing their budget as 'disastrous' for lower- and middle-income Canadians."

The budget, which proposed to more than double the price of crude oil in Canada over four years and nearly quadruple the tax on petrol, effective immediately, precipitated the Conservative Government's fall.

With the budget voided, Mr Clark has pledged to reintroduce its most important provisions if he is returned to office in the election.

Mr Trudeau's decision to stay on averts what could have been a crisis for the Liberals as they enter the mid-winter election

campaign. The alternative for the party would have been to hold a leadership convention next month, which would have afforded the party very little time to make its mark with the electorate before voting takes place.

The man widely accorded the best chance to succeed him, Mr John Turner, a former Finance Minister, recently decided against seeking the leadership, and the second strongest prospective candidate, Mr Donald MacDonald, another former Finance Minister, was showing extreme reluctance.

Mr Trudeau embarks on the campaign with an apparent handicap in that many Liberals, especially in the West, had tired of his leadership and wanted new blood at the party command. Canadians will know that even in his own party, Mr Trudeau is not accepted with total enthusiasm.

ing supporter
allah Khomeini
lead in Tehran

MS CORRESPONDENT

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THE TIMES WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 19, 1979

Max Harrison

NORWAY

days of uncertainty about its ability to continue in office, the minority Norwegian Labour Government has survived a crucial vote on its Bill to limit pay rises. The decision, by a margin of one vote, was taken yesterday. Norway's prices freeze ends on New Year's Day, Denis Taylor writes.

It is a long time in Norwegian politics. Seven years ago, the minority Labour Government of Odvar Nordli looked for a way to curb pay rises. Opposition, to carry out the pay rises, was a 15-month price and freeze ends on December 31. Most of the areas of government had been over the parliamentary committee. One issue suddenly capable of unseating the government. This was the legislation to put unions on the Norwegian Labour Union, in a privileged position.

But public and Parliamentary attitudes to the nuclear modernization programme are another matter. There seems to be a split in the Norwegian mind, which appears prepared to accept membership of a military alliance based on the nuclear deterrent and at the same time to reject nuclear weapons as well.

Nuclear weapons have stirred passions in recent years, more than at any time for almost 20 years. The Government of Mr Odvar Nordli sought to make NATO modernization conditional on an offer to the Russians of substantive negotiations to reduce the level of armaments in Europe. But this was not enough to carry Labour wholeheartedly with the Prime Minister. An important party gathering at Lillehammer showed a certain support for new theatre nuclear forces (TNF) deployed in Europe.

After a session of the Parliamentary Labour Group two weeks ago, it was suddenly announced that Mr Nordli was flying to Washington and that Mr Røffelt Steen, Minister of Commerce and party chairman, was going to Moscow.

This travelling balancing act was certainly dramatic. A previous debate over

Union, 130 miles long and close to the important Russian military region around the warm-water port of Murmansk.

was unprecedented unilaterally to dispatch a minister to Moscow at such a delicate stage in NATO negotiations.

Mr Karl Willoch, leader of the Conservatives, the largest opposition party, with 41 seats compared with Labour's 76, rejected the Prime Minister's argument that the Government was not obliged to discuss party matters with other parties or other NATO governments. The Conservative leader called Mr Nordli's justification of the Moscow visit alarming. Mr Willoch said the Prime Minister was confusing party and state in a disquieting way and added that Mr Steen's journey gave the Russians another chance to put pressure on Norway.

There is a strong bipartisan tradition in Norwegian foreign policy, and Mr Willoch accused the Prime Minister of breaching convention by failing to talk to the Opposition.

But this was a time when the Prime Minister was more concerned with fissures appearing inside his own party than with bipartisanship. A previous debate over



Photograph: South Rail

nuclear policy had split Labour and produced a breakaway socialist party in 1961. The battle over whether Norway should join the EEC, a move narrowly rejected in the 1972 referendum, also created enormous stresses for Labour.

The journeys to Washington and Moscow were not, therefore, purely theatrical. Some observers put the opposition to nuclear modernization at about 30 out of the 76 Labour MPs. Mr Nordli could only make sure of getting convincing Parliamentary support by concentrating on pushing for early East-West negotiations on arms control.

Norwegian political arithmetic is fluid. Parliamentary voting patterns depend on issues far more than they do in Britain. This remains the Norwegian way, even when there are political swings in the electorate. The Conservatives made striking gains in the last general election in 1977.

Parliament has a fixed four-year term, with local government elections serving as mid-term popularity

tests. After the adverse results of the local elections three months ago, Mr Nordli sought to refurbish his administration's image and performance with a sweeping Cabinet reshuffle.

As an illustration of the kind of opposition to be found on an important issue, the Centre Party, with 12 seats in the Storting, is concerned with the damage oil development north of latitude 62° north might do to the fishing grounds.

The Christian Democrats (with 22 representatives) opposed Labour over the granting of free abortions within the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, and differ on Church and educational issues. The Left Socialists disagree with the Government on defence and energy policies. Although there is no pact, these two left-wing votes in effect give Labour a majority over all other parties.

Government economic policies, notably the prices and wages freeze, have received wide support. The freeze, imposed 15 months ago, is scheduled to end on New Year's Eve. Such factors as rising import costs mean that there has been a low level of inflation. The consumer price index shows a rate of 4.8 per cent for the 12 months ending in July.

The Government's new strategy is to seek to limit pay increases throughout the economy by law to the levels of those scheduled to be negotiated by the spring between the employers' organization and the Norwegian TUC, the LO, with the Government acting as a third party. Such a law is unprecedented in a country where half the labour force is outside the LO. The aim is to stop a wages explosion after January 1.

The LO does not look likely to press for wages much out of line with the rate of inflation. Norwegian workers appear to have made the connection between wage levels and domestic and export prices.

But the central economic question is whether Norway has learnt that it cannot escape restraint imposed by the world economy. When the other industrialized economies went into recession in 1974, Norway decided to stimulate growth and maintain the highest possible employment by borrowing heavily abroad against its oil. The average Norwegian annual rate of unemployment since the war has been about 1 per cent.

With unions negotiating separately, wages rose by up to 20 per cent and inflation reached 11.7 per cent. Exports lost their competitive edge between 1974 and 1977, but some ground has been recovered during the freeze.

The level of indebtedness incurred during the push for growth remains high. At the end of September official statistics put it at \$20,000m.

Norway now faces a greater variety of international issues than ever before. It has to decide how to handle its oil and gas wealth. It has to deal with Soviet maritime ambitions in the Barents Sea, which could also have interesting petroleum deposits. It has a delicate role to play in Svalbard (Spitzbergen), where the Russians, who form a bigger community than the Norwegians, have been testing the sovereign state, Norway.

The Norwegians might well have agreed to Russian helicopters and an airstrip on Svalbard had they been asked, but the point is that the Norwegians were not asked. Both superpowers now see Svalbard as strategically important.

If oil is taken into account, Britain is Norway's largest trading partner, but Oslo is cultivating a closer relationship with the EEC in general.

As well as doing between 70 and 80 per cent of its trade with the Community, the Norwegians talk to Brussels about an increasing variety of questions, including trade, energy, industrial, transport and fishery policies. Oil has also made other countries keener to develop contacts with Norway.

The Norwegians were on the brink of joining the European Monetary System (EMS), but drew back when it became clear that Britain and Sweden were not taking the plunge.

The proposed deal between the Norwegian Government and the Swedish Volvo company came to nothing last January when the Volvo shareholders vetoed the scheme. This saved the Oslo Government from the possibility of an embarrassing vote in the Storting. But the failure of this project does not necessarily mean the end of all prospects of a marriage between Norwegian oil and Swedish technology. Indeed, economic logic points towards such a partnership.

Michael Frenchman describes the oil scene

Mood of realism and cautious optimism

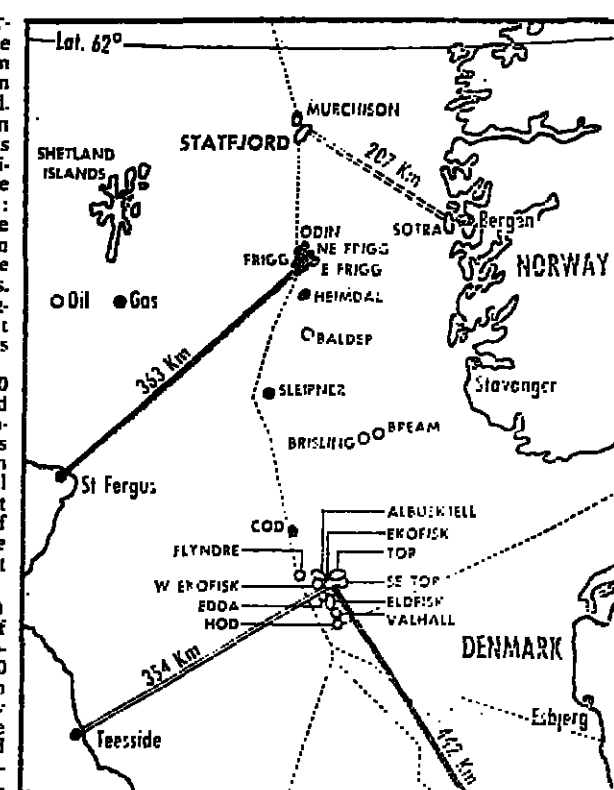
In the past five years Norway has undergone a change from professional optimism to almost cynical pessimism where oil is concerned. Today a mood of realism and practicality prevails coupled with cautious optimism for the 1980s. The lessons have been hard: rapid inflation, one of the largest foreign debt ratios in the world, and one of the highest unit labour costs. But now the scene is changing and the Government does seem to be getting its oil sums correct.

Production is about 40 million tonnes a year and the Royal Norwegian Petroleum Directorate expects this to rise to 50 million tonnes of oil equivalent (oil and gas) by the end of next year, which will be one of the most crucial in the country's oil development programme.

The Storting (Parliament) has already put a ceiling of 90 million tonnes on oil production, approximately 10 times the country's needs, in order to prevent unnecessary inflation and to satisfy the demands of domestic and international financial house-keeping. But Mr Arve Johnsen, managing director of Statoil (the national oil agency), and the Labour party see a need to accelerate the oil development programme in the next decade. The strong environmental lobby, however, wants a much reduced output.

Mr Johnsen believes that the 90 million tonnes mark will be reached by the 1990s as the result of encouraging new finds made this summer. One of them, the gas field in the so-called block 31/2 made by the major partners, Statoil and Shell, may be the largest gas strike in the North Sea. Estimates of the reserves in this new field range from three to 10 times that of the giant Frigg field. Gas has been found at a deep level, 325 metres, which will cause some production difficulties.

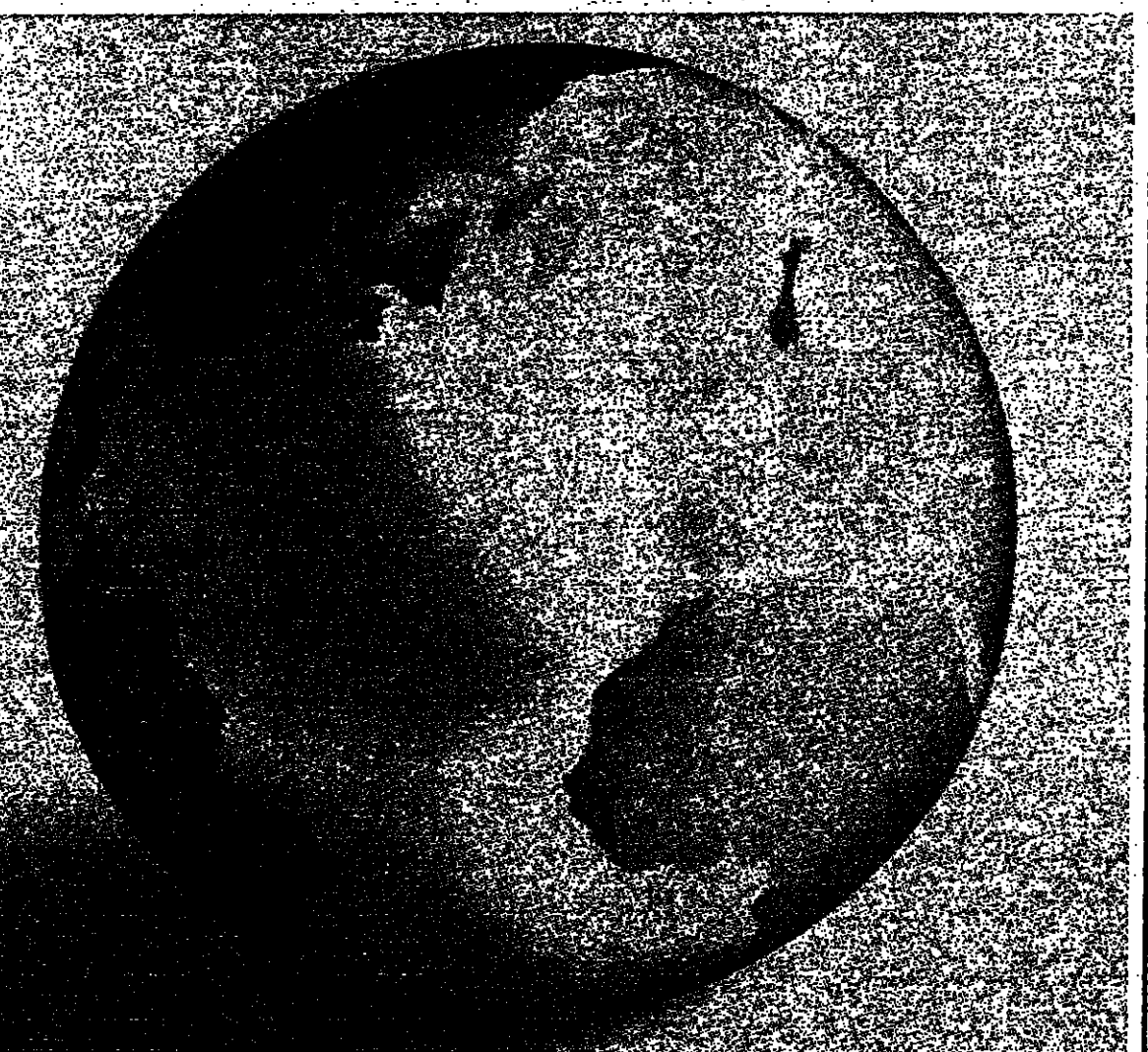
The field has yet to be proved conclusively, and test drilling—which was to have been finished by now—will not take place until next year. Production will not begin until the late 1980s. There is wide interest in this block, as those surrounding it have yet to be allocated. Until now all gas and oil finds have been below latitude 62 and the Storting is to debate the final go-ahead for drilling north of this latitude next year.



Altogether some 32,000 people are employed in the industry. When operations start in these northern latitudes it will mean a slight increase in the overall oil activity and possibly more employment in some areas.

Trying to get the right economic formula between what is needed and what is desirable has been a constant problem as has been the relationship between oil development, industrial output and employment. Norway has tried more recently to stabilize its production with an estimated investment of 42,000m kroner had been invested in permanent installations and pipelines and another 6,000m kroner in exploration. Excluding northern operations, development investment is expected to level off to under 10m kroner annually.

Proved reserves at present prices are said to be worth about 1,000,000m kroner and revenues to the state for 1979-81 are estimated at 22,000m kroner, some 3,000m kroner more than was estimated last spring. The question of taxes and revenues continued on next page



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The Times Special Report on Finland will be published on February 27th 1980.

NORWAY

Industrial growth in many sectors is bringing the economy out of the doldrums and reflects a continuing upswing but employment remains a problem

A gleam from black gold

The past year has seen some dramatic changes in the political and economic fortunes of the five Nordic countries. There have been elections in three. In the case of Denmark and Norway, there have been clashes between the minority Liberal and Labour governments respectively and the trade unions. Both these countries have severe unemployment problems. But Norway, unlike the unfortunate Danes, has the black gold of the North Sea, so fall back on it if the economic planners get their policies wrong.

However, the past 12 months have seen a sharp improvement in Norway which has had a growth rate of over 4 per cent, about the same as the 1967-74 average.

The 15-month price freeze, which ends on December 31, and several small devaluations of the kroner, have all helped to make Norwegian exports a little more competitive on world markets, but the exceptionally high unit costs are still a problem. In spite of this and the poor domestic demand for goods, there appears to be a general upswing in process, certainly for the short term.

Increasing oil revenues, estimated at 22,000m kroner this year, a 10 per cent increase in exports, an improvement in the balance of payments deficit for the first seven months from 7,400m kroner last year to 4,100m kroner; and a substantial fall in the balance of payments, current account position. With continued improvement,

improved overall position. Inflation appears to be holding at a fairly constant figure of about 4.7 per cent, one of the best in the Nordic region.

The recent budget, introduced by Mr Ole Sand, chief economist of the LO (equivalent to the TUC), who replaced Dr Per Kleppe as Minister of Finance, calls for a 3.3 per cent rise in expenditure next year. An increase of about 1 per cent in the GDP is forecast. There will be a total increase in revenues of nearly 18 per cent to 9,000m kroner of which oil money will account for half the sum.

If world oil prices and revenues continue to rise, there is likely to be a surplus in the balance of payments, current account position. With continued improvement,

in many areas likely in 1980 real disposable income may also rise from 4 per cent to 6 per cent but this might also be the effect of a fall in the inflationary spiral as it did some five years ago when false optimism over oil riches set in. This will make it essential for the Government to maintain as full an employment level as possible. Already, approximately one million jobs are subsidised by the state.

As part of its general strategy, the Government is already insisting that companies bidding for new oil concessions must also submit on-shore job creation programmes (see oil story) in the form of new factories or jobs, ventures with international companies.

With two top trade unionists in the new Cabinet—other is Mr Lars Skytten, also rise from 4 per cent to 6 per cent but this might also be the effect of a fall in the inflationary spiral as it did some five years ago when false optimism over oil riches set in. This will make it essential for the Government to maintain as full an employment level as possible. Already, approximately one million jobs are subsidised by the state.

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Exports improving

The Norwegian export industry has improved its profitability during 1979, assisted by a wage freeze begun in September 1978 and also as a result of the devaluations in 1977 and 1978. The stock of export goods which increased more than normally in 1975-77 because of the Government's counter-cyclical policy, has been reduced by more than 40 per cent, and expectations are that it will remain low for the next three months.

Production for export (including petroleum) increased by 11.5 per cent for January-September. Seasonally adjusted indices for July-September, excluding petroleum, show an increase in industrial production for export of 3 per cent more than the previous quarter's.

Export prices increased by 11 per cent more during the first six months of 1979 than during the corresponding period in 1978, while import prices rose by 7 per cent, thus improving the terms of trade by 4 per cent on traditional goods.

The average wage for men and women in the manufacturing industries increased by 4.9 per cent in the first six months in relation to the corresponding period in 1978, but costs to the industry increased by 7.4 per cent because of new regulations for sickness benefits and so on, together with a productivity increase of 5.2 per cent. This resulted in an increase in

wage costs. However, it is expected that the final result for the year may be somewhat lower. If this is so, Norway's competitive ability will be improved by 9 to 10 per cent in 1979.

Production for consumption showed a modest increase of 1.7 per cent in the January-September period. Most of the growth occurred in the third quarter and there are indications that these growth tendencies are continuing into the fourth quarter.

Retail trade volume was nearly 2 per cent less in the January-July period with furniture and appliances proving sluggish, and car demands increasing steeply towards the end of the period.

Production of investment goods has declined by 3 per cent in the January to September period. This must be seen in conjunction with the low level of investments planned by industry in 1979. Performed investments were less than expected to August and a moderate growth is expected to take place during the latter part of 1979.

The metal mining industry is benefiting from the higher international prices and production volume is up 10 per cent on the January to September period compared to 1978. A substantial part of the increase came in the steel quarter, including oil and gas, the total mining index shows a 20 per cent increase, with signs of improvement for the remainder of 1979, due especially to

larger output from the Ekofisk fields.

Manufacturing of consumer products is stagnant, showing a small decline in textiles and a minor increase in foods for the nine-month period up to the end of September compared with 1978.

There are, however, signs of accelerated production in the third quarter.

Meat production increased by nearly 15 per cent in volume for the nine months up to the end of September compared with 1978. Steel and ferro-alloys increased by 20 per cent, and non-ferrous metals by nearly 8 per cent.

Total incoming orders gained pleasingly in the third quarter, and the order reserve is 9 per cent higher than at the end of the third quarter in 1978.

Production of machinery increased by nearly 9 per cent over 1978 for the first nine months of 1979 and shows signs of acceleration towards the end of the period. Incoming orders in the third quarter were up 33 per cent on 1978 although the fourth quarter is usually sluggish. The order reserves for this industry are up by 5 per cent on 1978 and we must look back to 1975 to find a higher order backlog at the end of the third quarter.

Svein Erling Haugen

editor, Petroleum Oil Power

Boost for pulp

On June 28 a new company was formed in Norway which will have the effect of centralising further the activities of the country's hard-pressed pulp and paper industry, and it is hoped to help to boost its position.

Norsk Virkesimport, known as Norwood, is a joint venture created by the industry to direct all imports of pulpwood to member companies of the Norwegian Pulp and Paper Association (NPPA) in southern and eastern Norway. Its establishment underlines two basic facts about the industry: home-grown raw material is no longer available in sufficient quantities to maintain the industry at its present level and full use is essential in the fight to improve profitability.

Cooperation is now the key word in the Norwegian industry as companies face a slowing of growth in the European market and greater competition from the North Americans.

Norway has imported large quantities of pulpwood for a number of years and in the past decade imports have amounted to about two million cubic metres a year, worth some 400m kroner (about £37m).

Exports of pulp and paper have played an important role in Norway's economy since the start of the century but this has declined in more recent years. During the 1950s, the value of pulp and

paper exports amounted to 20 per cent to 23 per cent of the nation's total foreign sales, but today, mainly the result of new export trades and the exploitation of North Sea oil, the figure has dropped to only 6 per cent.

Total production of pulp and board in 1978 was 1,250,000 tonnes and shipments of market pulp reached about 500,000 tonnes.

Last year proved to be particularly damaging. A survey of 22 Norwegian wood processing companies reported a 9 per cent fall in turnover, while there was a total deficit of the year of 107.8m kroner (£10m).

This year there has been a marked improvement. Total exports of paper and board rose by 24 per cent in tonnage and 28 per cent in value in the first quarter of 1979 compared with the year earlier.

It is on newsprint that the industry is pinning much of its hope for the future. A few months ago four of the leading paper makers—Skogindustri, Union and Saugbrugsforening—joined forces with the state to build a new 600m Krone (£55,500,000) plant which, it is hoped, will turn Norway from an importer of bleached kraft pulp into a significant exporter in 1980.

Edward Townsend

Mood of realism and cautious optimism

continued from previous page

In particular "royalty oil" which is paid by the operating companies to the state in place of cash, is now the subject of much controversy between the Labour party and the opposition groups.

Difficulties like this and constantly varying estimates as to revenues and production make the struggle to maintain employment and create new jobs an unenviable task for any government. Because of this it was conditional in the fourth round of concessions last April that all companies receiving licences should guarantee to establish some kind of shore-based operation which would create new jobs. This "job creation" proviso applied to eight awards, and the Government hopes joint ventures and co-operation agreements between oil companies and industry will become an established pattern for the future.

Some of the agreements include a joint company formed between Amoco Chemicals and forum which will produce and market chemicals for use in the oil industry itself.

There is a major co-operation plan with the West German group Deminor, which is looking at an iron-sponge processing plant at Emden for which Norway would supply the raw material. Another agreement with ASV and Veba will examine the feasibility of producing a plant in Norway for supplying light metals and plastics for the building, motor and packaging industries. Superior Oil Norge and a number of Norwegian industrial companies are planning a 45m kroner copper and iron ore processing plant. How successful projects of this kind will be remains to be seen, but there is no doubt that the abortive deal with the Swedish giant Völvö a year ago has provided a stimulus to the oil industry link.

The most successful field so far is the Ekofisk complex which is being developed in four stages. Production started in 1971, and two stages have been completed. Last summer production amounted to more than half a million barrels of oil a day. The oil is pumped 35km to Teesside, and gas from the field goes 442km to Emden in West Germany. Production has been halted on at least three occasions by accidents, the most important being the blow-out on the Bravo platform in April, 1977.

It is this last event that has given the Norwegian environmentalists such a field day in their fight to prevent further oil exploration and to introduce severe and highly expensive anti-pollution measures. In reality, pollution from the Bravo acci-

dent was fairly small and damage to the environment minimal because of fortunate weather conditions.

Gas also goes from the British sector of the Frigg field to St Fergus. Sixty-one per cent of the reserves are in the Norwegian sector of the field.

The notorious Statfjord field which straddles the median line between the two countries is being developed in two major stages. Britain and Norway have now concluded a new operating agreement whereby Norway has 58.8 per cent of the field reserves and Britain 11.1 per cent. This agreement has platform known as the Con-

crete base will have a storage capacity of 200,000 tonnes of oil.

The first-stage platform, the Statfjord A, and the single-point mooring buoy are in place, and production is expected to reach at least 250,000 barrels a day. A second platform, the B, has been the subject of much debate because of the environmental protection measures needed and increased production costs. After numerous joint talks between Britain and Norway it was decided to go ahead with an integrated concrete cost of the massive deck is expected to be completed and in 1982.

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according to new data gathered on the extent of the field as development takes place.

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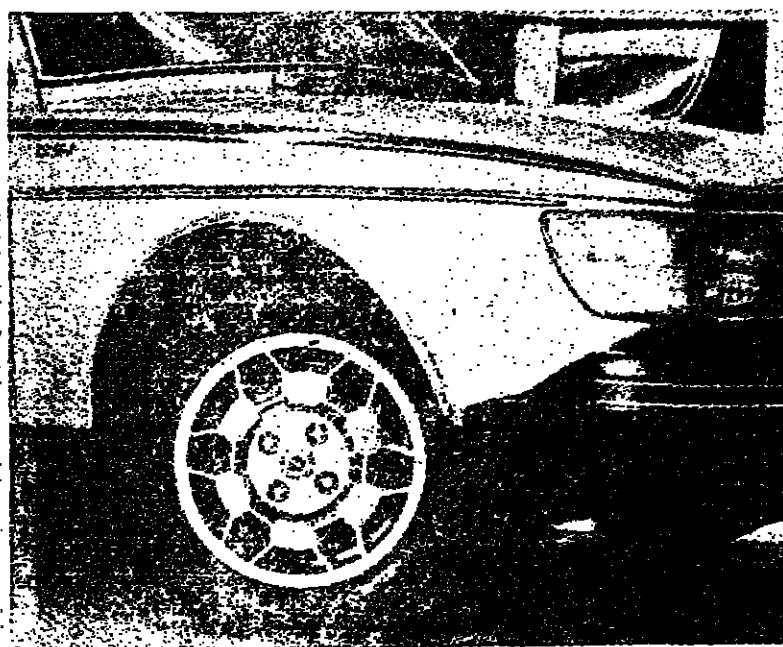
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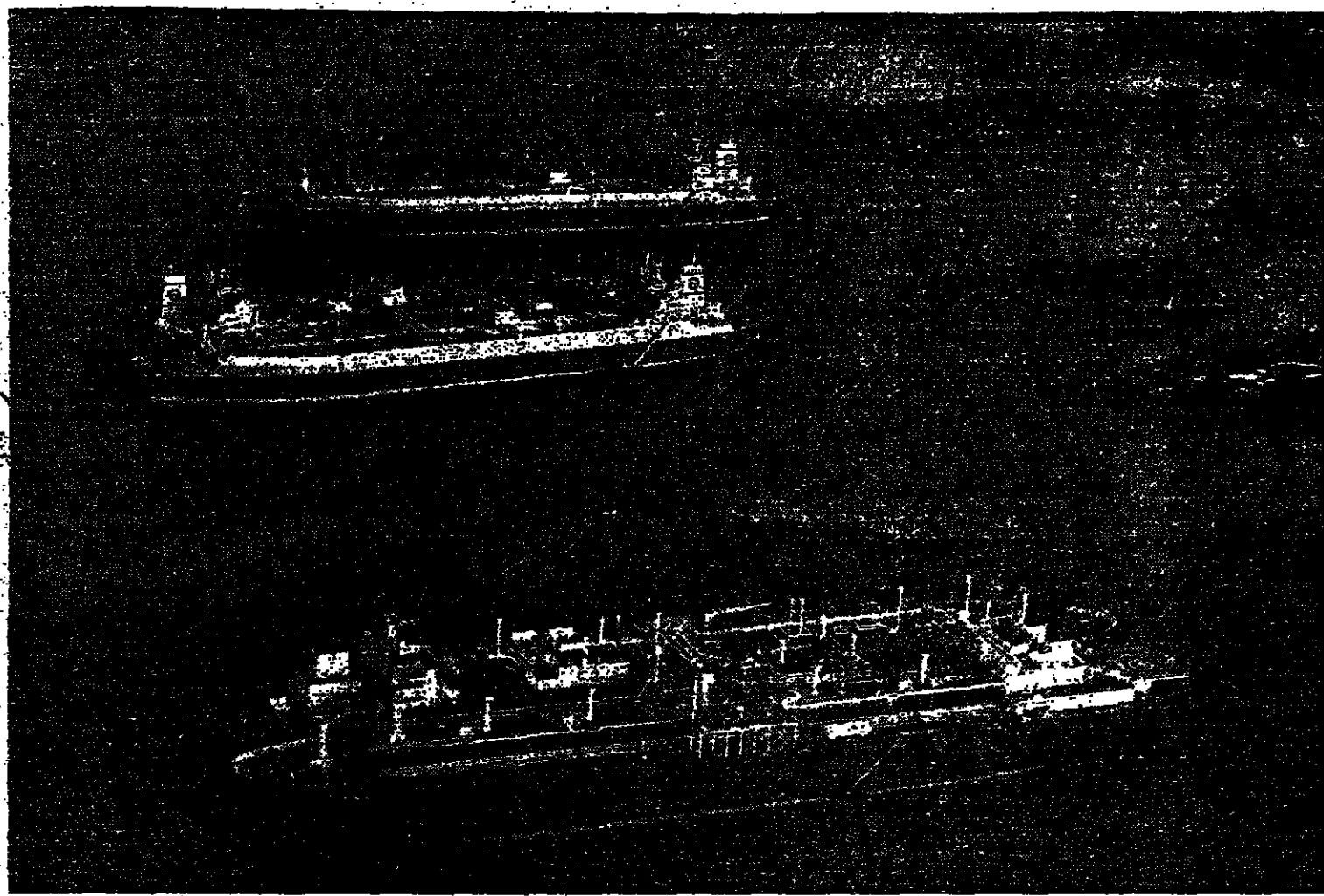
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Mining help

Michael Frenchman looks at how a typical traditional herring fishing port is dragging itself into the oil age

Town that refuses to lie down



and three quarters of exploration and development of the oil and gas resources on the Norwegian side of the North Sea. Stavanger, where Haugesund, a typical traditional herring fishing port, is now being transformed into an oil port. The town, which has a population of about 28,000, is situated on a narrow strip of land between the sea and the mountains. The town is divided into two parts by a channel which divides the town. The old wooden houses that line the narrow channel are being replaced by modern buildings. The town is now a major oil port, with several large oil tankers and a number of smaller vessels. The town is also a major centre for the oil industry, with many oil companies having offices in the town. The town is also a major centre for the fishing industry, with many fishing boats and a number of fishing companies. The town is a unique blend of old and new, with the traditional herring fishing port and the modern oil port coexisting.

What makes Haugesund interesting is that it is a town that refuses to lie down, and be bypassed by the oil business. It feels that the oil business should have been applied to the oil companies to move away from Stavanger much earlier. More than 100,000 people live in the county of Rogaland, of which Haugesund is the natural centre. It has a population of about 28,000 and its main livelihood has been derived from fishing, but has been transformed into an oil port. The town is now a major oil port, with several large oil tankers and a number of smaller vessels. The town is also a major centre for the oil industry, with many oil companies having offices in the town. The town is also a major centre for the fishing industry, with many fishing boats and a number of fishing companies. The town is a unique blend of old and new, with the traditional herring fishing port and the modern oil port coexisting.

Haugesund Mekaniske Verksted, had to reduce its labour force to 1,000. The town has now won a contract for a 300m kroner coast guard vessel as well as a small tanker conversion which will enable laid-off workers to return to the yard with the possibility of new men being taken on besides. This old-established yard recently opened one of the largest dry docks in Europe, certainly in the North Sea area. It has a capacity for vessels of up to 150,000 tons. Its overall length is 283 metres by 46 metres wide with a maximum draught capacity of 8.5 metres. This dock has proved invaluable since its completion a year ago and has been in constant demand. The dock and harbour are only just over two miles from the open sea, a substantial advantage over Stavanger and Bergen.

One of the leaders in planning the future development of the city has been the harbour-master who saw himself as a latter day Pind Piper of Haugesund leading a procession of slow-moving oil rigs and platforms to the port for servicing and repairs, besides all the other business that goes with the oil activity. Norwegians are notoriously slow in their approach but Mr Odd Michael Odland, and his assistant, Mr Trygve Bjørnerem, are two exceptions. The harbour-master convinced the town authorities that it had to spend money on the oil business and it has now almost completed a \$23m offshore deepwater base on a small island linked to the city by a narrow causeway. This has an area of 25,000 sq metres and offers a deep-sea quay of 150 metres, with a depth of 50ft, and longer quay of 250 metres with a depth of 22ft.

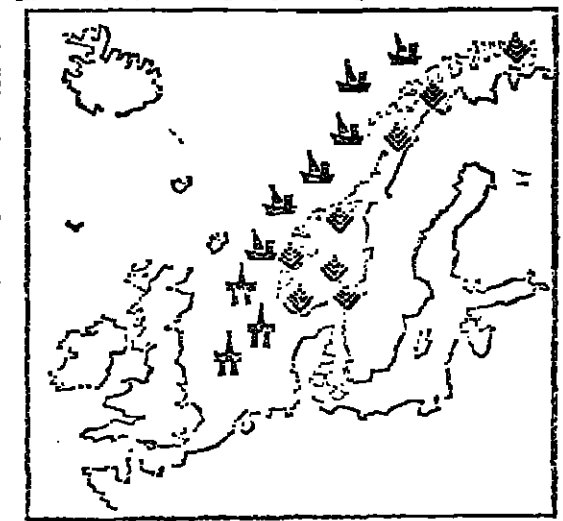
At one time there were five of the world's largest lng carriers moored together representing the greatest insured value of shipping at any one place. Today there is only one ship and that came straight from the maker's yard and has never been in commission. It is hoped that five more lng carriers might be joining it from the Far East in the not too distant future. Although there are still some employment difficulties in Haugesund there is a will to survive and the town is more liberal in its attitude to the outside world than some of the "valley" towns. Its forward-looking attitude together with the about-turn in the overall economy of the country will no doubt ensure its survival for many years to come.

Perhaps one of Mr Odland's most enterprising moves since he came to the city some six years ago, was to turn the decline in world shipping to his advantage. South of the Garpefjæra, the old part of the port, is the historically interesting bay of Bovagen. This small, almost landlocked bay with a sandy bottom is overlooked by an ancient church, St Olav's, founded by King Haakon in about 1250. Surrounding the church are many old ship burials from the Viking and previous eras. The Romans also came there.

Today, only a hundred metres or so from the church, huge gas tankers of up to 250,000 tons lie at anchor, laid up because of the decline in demand. These vessels need safe harbours, protected from the wind, because when in ballast their towering topsides present a tremendous area of steel which acts as a "sail" when exposed to the wind. Anchorage such as Bovagen are hard to find. Mr Odland, who has now left his job with the port authority and is working for the Norwegian central port directorate, travelled to many countries, from Algeria to Indonesia, to persuade ship owners to bring their vessels to Haugesund for lay-up where they bring in up to £1m a year in mooring fees.

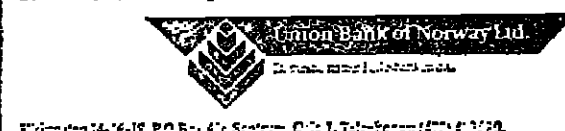
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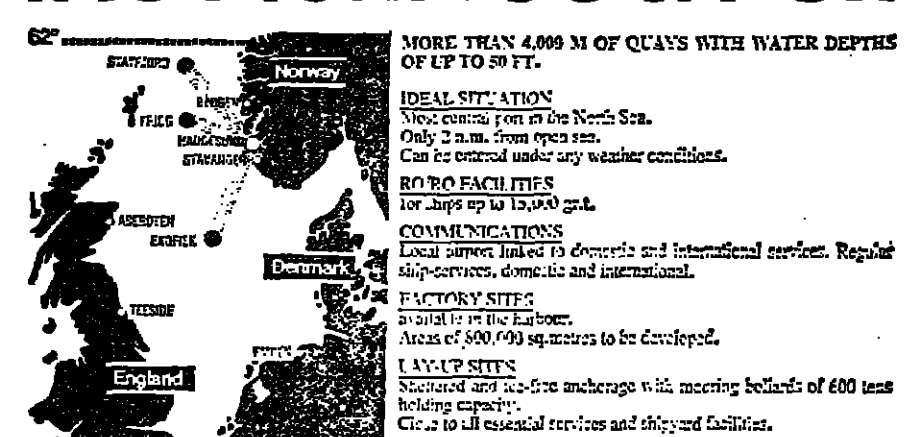
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Peter Hill, Industrial Editor, describes how shipbuilding is getting back afloat, and visits a place where West lives with East

Ebb tide begins to turn

There are signs that at last the ebb tide which Norway's shipbuilding industry has been suffering from is beginning to turn. But it is some time yet before the industry is back on its feet. The industry has been hit hard by the recession in shipping, and the number of ships ordered has fallen sharply. The industry is now facing a difficult situation, with many shipyards closed and a large number of workers unemployed. The industry is now trying to turn the tide, and there are signs that it is beginning to do so. The number of ships ordered has increased, and the industry is now starting to build new ships. The industry is now facing a difficult situation, with many shipyards closed and a large number of workers unemployed. The industry is now trying to turn the tide, and there are signs that it is beginning to do so. The number of ships ordered has increased, and the industry is now starting to build new ships.

In the period to mid-October the gross freight income for the Norwegian foreign fleet had risen by 3,000m kroner to more than 21,000m kroner while the number of ships laid up because of lack of work has been reduced to a mere nine vessels. But in the previous lean years the Norwegian flag fleet has been considerably reduced through sales to operators outside Norway. With the high relative costs of operation, Norwegian shipping companies were obliged to cut back their tonnages. A total of 200 ships were sold from the Norwegian flag fleet in 1978 and in the first 10 months of this year a further 110 vessels were sold. The clear implication of that policy is that more than 300 ships could be operated more efficiently and more cheaply at lower cost levels.

By the middle of 1979 the Norwegian fleet amounted to 348 vessels, totalling 38,300,000 tons and all the signs are that with a stabilization of the shipping market, the tendency to dispose of ships has considerably reduced and the fleet is likely to remain close to that level. The better conditions experienced by Norway's shipping community have enhanced the prospects for the country's shipbuilding industry which has been forced to cut back substantially on its levels of activity because of the depressed state of the world shipbuilding market. Four years ago Norway's shipbuilding industry produced more than a million tons of new merchant ships. But last year deliveries fell to only 300,000 tons gross and over the same period 4,500 jobs disappeared from the industry.

Earlier attempts by the Government to stimulate new orders from domestic shipping companies produced only a trickle of orders and further measures were introduced to promote orders. The measures included a credit scheme for domestic owners which provided 80 per cent credit over 12 years with a three-year moratorium for repayments in the first three years; subsidized interest rates for export orders to developing countries; a 10 per cent subsidy on new buildings for domestic owners equivalent to 450m kroner for the two-year period 1978-79; and government support for restructuring of the industry. Since then, however, the domestic owner subsidy has been lifted from 10 per cent to 20 per cent of contract price, while further funds have been allocated for export orders to developing countries and the amount of government aid available for restructuring of shipbuilding activities has been increased. In the first nine months of this year the shipping industry placed orders worth only a trickle of 2,000m kroner with Norwegian yards and foreign yards contracts were signed for orders totalling more than one million tons.

Mining on world's roof helps diplomacy

Through the clear air, the SAS jet from London flies up its approach to Svalbard International Airport. There, down to the sea, the lights of the island power station at Barentsburg supply power to the Russian settlement. Svalbard, Norwegian territory, but it is not quite as straightforward as it may seem. Time for one last drink before the plane touches down at the Tarmac. The miners, in a strange place, where the West lives cheek by jowl with the East, but contact between the Norwegian settlement in Longyearbyen and the Russian communities in Barentsburg and Pyramiden is both difficult and irregular.

It is the coal deposits which prompted the negotiations for an international treaty to determine who would be responsible for administration of this bleak group of islands. In July 1925 sovereignty was accorded to Norway, with 41 other nations allowed rights of access to explore and exploit the island's mineral reserves. The construction of fortifications, or use for military purposes, remain forbidden.

The strategic importance of the archipelago has long been recognized by both Norway and the Soviet Union. They are the only countries to have exercised their rights under the terms of the treaty to establish permanent communities there. For the Soviet Navy the freedom to pass between the south coast of Svalbard and the North Cape of Norway from its bases around Murmansk into the waters of the North Atlantic is of enormous strategic importance, even today. Norway, as a member of Nato, and the sovereign power, is obliged to ensure that its presence there is recognized and understood by the Soviet Union. Russian concern about the security of the sea route manifested itself as long ago as 1944 when the Soviet Union sought unsuccessfully to create a Norwegian-Soviet condominium in Spitsbergen. Since then the Soviet Union has pursued a somewhat cavalier attitude in its activities and policies in Svalbard. In the past two to three years that has helped the Norwegian administrators to produce a more positive and vigorous policy.

In order to emphasize the continuing presence of Norway and its wish to prevent further Soviet inroads, the Norwegian Government has become much more forceful in the implementation of its policy. For this reason the promotion of exploration for coal and other minerals plays an important part in the delicate business of diplomacy. The main aims of this are to preserve the unique features of the archipelago and reduce tension. Earlier this year Statoil, Norway's state oil company, began surveys in conjunction with oil exploration. Although the chances of discoveries of commercial scale are considered to be slim (previous searches have failed to find any significant oil or gas reserves) the possibility cannot be ruled out totally. Similarly, the islands are thought to contain much greater coal reserves than previously expected. Total coal reserves, according to Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani, which works the mines, could be at least 200 million tons in 3,000 square miles.

TWICE THE SIZE OF ENGLAND

in area

HALF THE SIZE OF LONDON

in population

-THAT'S NORWAY

This paradox has left its mark on Norwegian industry. It is an industry based on natural resources, and a limited domestic market has resulted in heavy emphasis being placed on the expansion and development of the export market. Kvaerner Group, the largest of the mechanical industry groups in Norway, is a typical example. Equipment for the fishing, woodworking, refrigerating and mining industry, hydro electrical turbines, offshore structures and equipment, and shipbuilding are all principal Kvaerner Products. Approximately 40 per cent of our production is exported. In recent years the financial results of the group has been among the best in Norwegian industry.

The best known Kvaerner product internationally is probably the manufacture and delivery of gas tankers for transportation of natural gas.

Last year, however the Kvaerner Group was awarded a contract worth 2.2 bill. Norw. Kroner (approx. £220 mill.) for the fabrication and assembly of a steel deck as well as the supply and installation of shaft equipment for the Statfjord B platform in the North Sea.

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NORWAY

Annelise Hopson looks at both sides of the argument
between industrialists and conservationists

Safeguarding the environment provokes debate

Oil pollution safeguards, acid rain, and general protection of the environment are important political issues which are costing the country millions of kroner. Under an industrial waste and protection scheme introduced in the mid-1970s between 20 and 25 per cent of the total capital investment in industry is being spent on measures to safeguard the environment.

This programme, which is scheduled to be completed by 1983, has led to a great deal of adverse comment from the private sector and from industrial organisations. They claim that these excessive measures, coupled with high production costs, are making Norwegian industrial goods uncompetitive on the world market.

Important new factors in the environmental debate are oil exploration and drilling north of 62°N and the controversial question of hydroelectric developments in some heavy spots in the northernmost parts of the country, some of which are important reindeer grazing grounds.

Whichever way you look at it, pollution is a sensitive question. One of the big issues is the effect of acid rain which is slowly ruining the soil. This has little calcium to absorb the acid, and damage is being caused to fresh water streams and fishing.

The acid comes mainly from the heavy industries in central Europe and Britain. A conference was held in Telemark in 1976 about the problems, in which 20 countries—among them Britain and six inter-governmental organisations—participated.

The objective of the conference was primarily to discuss international research into the effect of precipitation and the deposition of sulphur compounds on forest and fresh water ecosystems. The effects of sulphur dioxide on human health were also discussed.

The issue remains that the increasing acidity of the "sour downpour" has had a striking effect on chemical and biological conditions in fresh-water systems, particularly in the southern part of Norway. This part of the country consists mainly of subterranean bedrock that is highly resistant to chemical weathering.

"Air pollution is a major problem in Norway. This led to a Norwegian initiative some years ago to promote international cooperation to solve it. The Economic Commission for Europe convention signed by 32 states in Geneva last month is regarded as an important step forward. The convention provides a fundamental basis for further cooperation on a number of issues, including pollution."

Mr. Rolf Hansen, Minister of the Environment, says: "From statements made by various countries at the conference there is every reason to assume that practical and concrete work programmes will be submitted when the parties meet early next year to discuss the follow-up."

Pollution is not only a problem as far as air precipitation or oil is concerned. Like many other countries Norway is trying to protect its natural environment. Although the country still gets almost 100 per cent of its electricity from hydroelectric sources these still pollute streams and rivers, even though hydroelectric power is one of the cleanest sources of energy.

Last year the Storting (Parliament) debated the question of whether to allow two hydroelectric power plants to be constructed which would have affected the river systems on the Hardangervidda mountain plateau. This is a particularly beautiful area with two waterfalls and many reindeer.

Recently the parliamentary report concerning the Hardangervidda was discussed in the Storting. The Government's proposal to establish a national park and a landscape protection area on the Hardangervidda was approved. The issue was submitted to the Storting because of the special interest in, and scope of, the proposal.

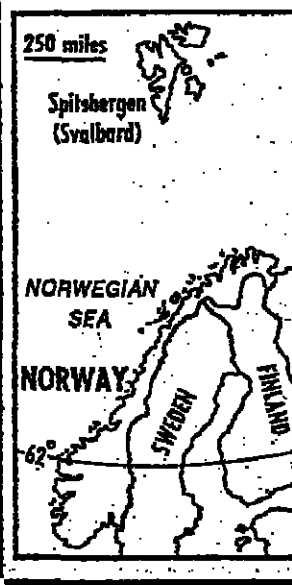
Last year the Storting voted 35 against 30 to construct a new hydroelectric power plant at the Alta Canyon in Finnmark, Norway's northernmost county. Last October the Government decided to postpone this highly controversial hydro-power development. The decision was made after the Government had received urgent appeals from the opposition parties in the Storting and also because of clashes of interest between the developers and the conservationists had become more and more marked.

The climax of the conflict was reached in October when seven Lapps (the original inhabitants of Finnmark, which is a very important reindeer grazing district to them) put up a tent outside the Storting and started a hunger strike in protest against the development work. At about the same time the Prime Minister received 10,700 telegrams from all parts of the country.

Most of them had similar texts, supporting the claims of the Lapps but not explicitly against the development plan for the Alta river. The present status of the Alta issue is that the Government in the near future will submit a report to the Storting on what has happened on the implementation of the decision made by the Storting concerning the development of the Alta river. It may be expected that the review of this report by the Storting will be a new debate also about the realities of the issue itself, the Minister of the Environment says.

However, a spokesman from the Norwegian Federation of Industry said: "We must have more hydroelectric power plants but that is not enough in the long run. Within 10 years there ought to be alternative sources of energy because hydro power will no longer be sufficient." "The present situation of uncertainty about nuclear power plants is intolerable. The Government has decided to deep-freeze the debate and the mass media are backing this policy. The industrial sector believes that nuclear power is to be preferred to coal or oil and the question ought not to be debated soon."

The minority Government, however, has stated that during the 1978-81 period no planning or building of nuclear power plants is envisaged.



Another problem facing the Government is whether to start drilling for oil north of the 62nd Parallel. This question involves pollution and energy as well as fisheries. After strong criticism from both the Opposition and the Minister of the Environment the question of drilling for oil north of the 62nd Parallel has evoked considerable discussion.

The Minister of the Environment says: "There has been no disagreement within the Government on exploratory drilling north of the 62nd Parallel. There has, however, been a discussion related to the question of

when an acceptable level of risk, including adequate oil pollution control, emergency arrangements, will have been established."

In the Norwegian Government's report to the Storting concerning exploratory drilling, definite demands were required to be met by the Norwegian oil pollution control before exploratory drilling could be started. The oil pollution control emergency arrangements will be discussed again in a new report from the Government relating to the implementation of the preparations concerning exploratory drilling. The report will be submitted in the near future and industry

Viking exhibition for London

Norway has one of the richest Viking heritages in Scandinavia and nowhere can this be seen more clearly than at the Viking Ship Museum at Bygdøy just outside the capital Oslo. Several ancient ships, the longest 70ft long, have been fully restored and are on display together with many other relics from the Viking era. Apart from the items themselves the simple and practical method of showing the vessels on their iron stands which can be looked at from small viewing platforms gives an impression of grandeur and scale. Looking at the blackened timbers of the ships against the stark white of the halls with their brightly lit alcoves in which are shown many objects from the Vikings' daily life, it is hard to believe that journeys of thousands of miles were made in these frail ships.

The largest ship is the Gokstad which is 70ft long by 17ft wide and is the best preserved. Its simple lines are the epitome of superb and aesthetically pleasing naval architecture. It is a practical landing-craft type of vessel compared to the much more ornate and slightly smaller Oseberg craft which has highly decorated and symbolic sternposts. Carved friezes run from the waterline to the top of the posts. These represent fabulous beasts from pre-Viking days. It is one of the finest examples of Viking craftsmanship.

Many items showing the extent of Viking artistic skill from the ships to jewelry, weapons and household goods are to be seen in London next year when one of the most comprehensive exhibitions about the Vikings will open at the British Museum on February 14. It is an unusual exhibition because it is the first time that so many items will be seen together. This perhaps helps to emphasize the widespread nature of the voyages that the Viking traders made in their longships.

They left their mark in the form of commercial trading capitals.

A silver crucifix from Trondheim. A northern image of Christ, elaborately dressed and with a moustache, is bound to the cross with thongs.

posts and farms from the Caspian Sea to Ireland, Greenland and North America. Many of the exhibits are coming from museums and collections scattered over just as wide a range. Some of the wooden items are too large and too fragile to leave their displays in the Scandinavian

However, many of the richer trappings of Viking life will be brought to London where they will be on show until July 20. The exhibition will then go to New York. Unfortunately it will not be seen in Scandinavia and many special arrangements are being made in the form of charter flights and tours to enable Scandinavians to come to London.

The exhibition is being arranged and sponsored by Times Newspapers Limited, SAS Scandinavian Airlines and the Cultural Fund of the Nordic Council.

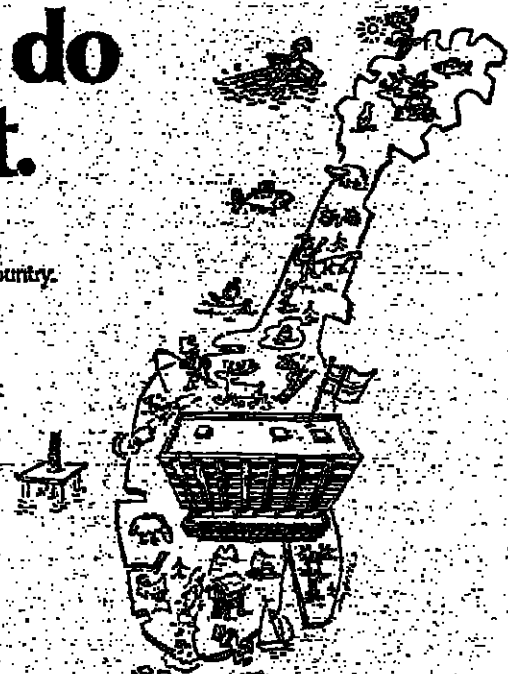
Michael Frenchman

The only thing you need to know about Norway is "Christiania Bank" - they'll do the rest.

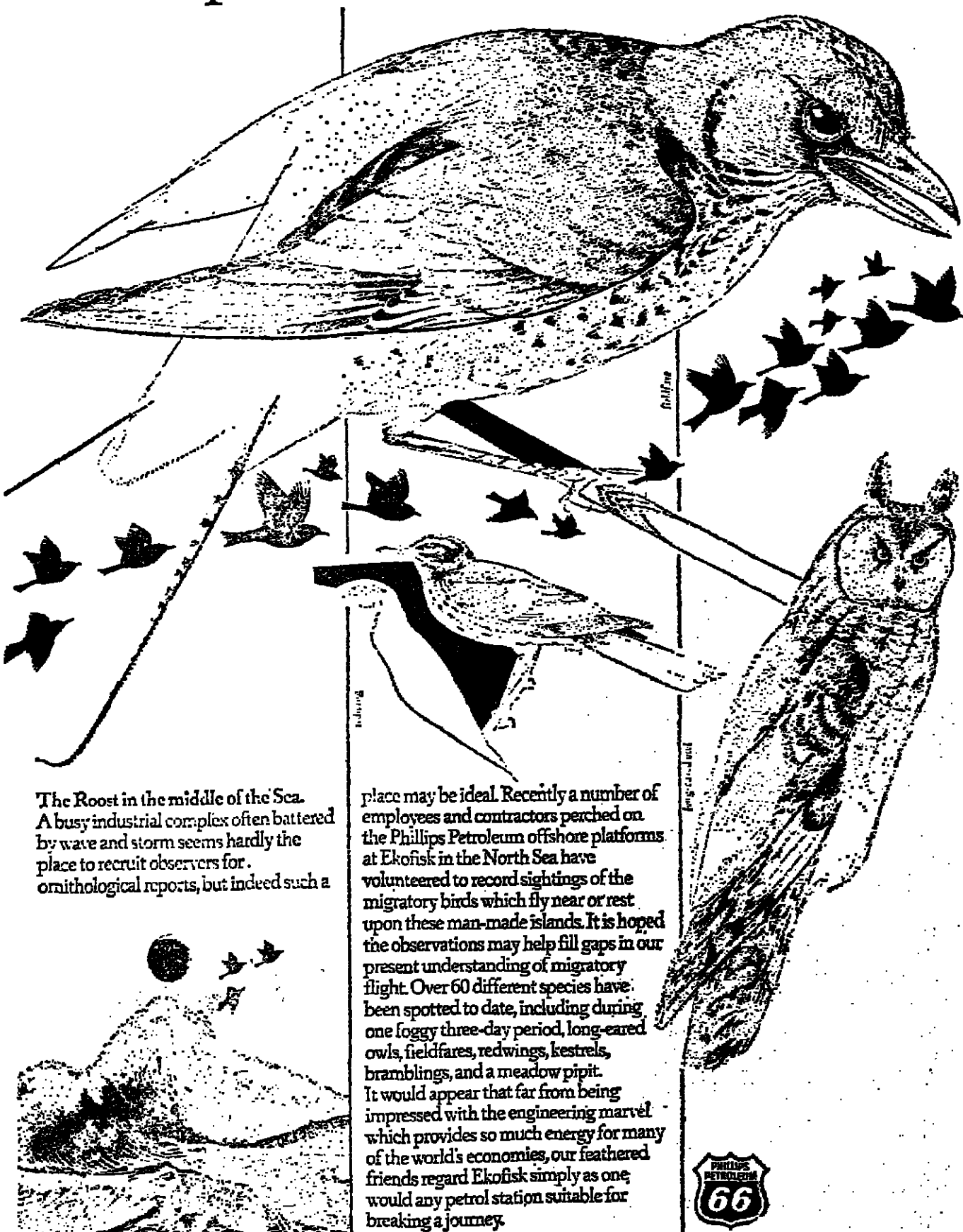
Christiania Bank og Kreditkasse is a full service commercial bank with branches throughout the country. Head Office: Sjøtorvet 7, Oslo. Subsidiary: Christiania Bank og Kreditkasse International S.A., 88, Grand Rue, Luxembourg. Representative Office: New York, Address: 375 Park Avenue, Suite 1705, New York, N.Y. 10022.

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A birdwatcher's view of the world of Phillips Petroleum.



The Roost in the middle of the Sea. A busy industrial complex often battered by wave and storm seems hardly the place to recruit observers for ornithological reports, but indeed such a

place may be ideal. Recently a number of employees and contractors perched on the Phillips Petroleum offshore platforms at Ekofisk in the North Sea have volunteered to record sightings of the migratory birds which fly near or rest upon these man-made islands. It is hoped the observations may help fill gaps in our present understanding of migratory flight. Over 60 different species have been spotted to date, including during one foggy three-day period, long-eared owls, fieldfares, redwings, kestrels, bramblings, and a meadow pipit. It would appear that far from being impressed with the engineering marvel which provides so much energy for many of the world's economies, our feathered friends regard Ekofisk simply as one would any petrol station suitable for breaking a journey.





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THE RISKS OF NUCLEAR POWER

reputable justification is needed for a decision to go out and buy product which recently came at a devastating cost to Pennsylvania by accident. The Government's announcement that it will allow the first of a new type of nuclear power station to be a pressurized water reactor (PWR) of the kind, though not same design, that burnt out Three Mile Island is a decision which Britain's twenty years trying to develop a nuclear industry entirely on our own. Since British industry is widely acknowledged to have a more serious attitude to the problems safety than the American, it is natural that chauvinistic ret should be touched with a justifiable alarm.

At this stage, however, it is not clear whether the technology of the PWR, but varies so greatly over the years that the case will be opponents at almost every stage of the argument. There are those who doubt whether need a large addition to our generating capacity in the next few years. Many who accept need insist that the dangers nuclear power as such are so great that it cannot be an acceptable means of filling the gap, as that the PWR is not safe enough to trust.

It is official policy for the first stage of nuclear development has remained in the domain of public authorities, there is not much to feed on, but feelings in Britain are less than they tend to be in neighbouring countries, in (perhaps because) of the fact that we are more used to being served by nuclear installations than most. Yesterday's announcement may provide a more passionate response. The questions raised are of great importance to the future of our society, that they deserve full rehearsal.

he first stage of the argu-

ment is widely accepted. It rests on the concept of the "energy gap". Energy demand is expected to rise steadily to the end of the century, while the price of imported oil will double in real terms (leaving aside the possibility that some political catalyst may cut it off altogether). North Sea oil and gas will begin to run out after 1990. Speculative new sources of energy, such as solar power, windmills, or nuclear fusion, cannot become a major factor before the end of the century at best. Conservation can and must make a contribution, but even the 20 per cent saving in efficiency assumed by official forecasts still leaves a wide gap to fill. The Government's large investment in coal mining will not be sufficient to fill the gap by itself. Still larger investment in mining, or fuel imports, or extra nuclear capacity will be required.

Barring accidents, nuclear power would be the cheapest of these, and home-mined coal the most expensive. The latter would also carry heavy environmental costs, being relatively free from the political uncertainties over supply that may gather round imported coal or gas (uranium, the raw material for nuclear power, is also an imported fuel, but its sources are claimed to be relatively reliable). Given the risk of profound social upheaval if a drastic shortfall in generating capacity ever occurred, the uncertainties suggest that it would be wise to pursue the nuclear option as well as the other alternatives. In this matter, however, we have to keep ourselves fully covered.

The question of type of reactor is not a difficult one, even after Three Mile Island. The second home-grown generation of gas-cooled reactors have run into serious problems at the building stage. The method cannot be relied on to provide the capacity when it would be

needed. For the stability of the industry, it is necessary to have a steady prospect of orders ahead. It is only prudent to seek experience now in the technology of the type of reactor which, in spite of one major disaster, is still the most widespread and successful in the world. The British PWR will be a freshly designed machine, subjected to rigorous British safety regulations, as well as to public inquiry and parliamentary approval. It will resemble Three Mile Island in its working principle, but not its details. If the problems with the AGR are solved, it will still be possible to return to that method later. Once again, the important thing is to keep ourselves covered.

But while we are covered, we should use the time to carry out a perpetual scrutiny of the relative risks of nuclear power and the alternatives. No type of reactor is entirely immune from the danger of major accident. The risks are far from being fully understood—there are still puzzles surrounding the Pennsylvania incident. The remote danger of a catastrophe that is difficult to visualize—with perhaps thousands of people afflicted with radiation sickness and large tracts of land inaccessible for decades—must be set against the much more certain but more familiar environmental and human costs of the alternatives. Every year accidents in British coal mines cause scores of deaths and many hundreds of serious injuries. What rate and type of accidents is society prepared to absorb to safeguard its energy sources? There are also dangers in the security problems of ferrying radioactive material about the country—though these are problems that are already with us. It would be foolish to claim that the nuclear option is safe, or even the safest, among other options. But it can be said that not to pursue it energetically with the other choices seems far more risky than carrying on.

Conserving energy

From Mr M. M. Watson
Sir, Discussion of energy policy continues to exhibit a serious omission, exemplified by a recent European statement (The Times, December 4) by the EEC Energy Commission. While there is concern for economies of oil, there is little consideration of conservation. Yet by conservation, energy consumption can be restrained without diminishing economic growth.

The policy of energy conservation must keep pace with, or even outstrip, economic growth. Official policy assumes, crudely, that supply has to match unregulated demand, which is tied rigidly to economic growth. Consumption rates are simply extrapolated forward. A conservation policy focuses on controlling demand rather than supply, through the efficient use of energy. Efficient energy use calls for a massive programme of insulation and waste recuperation (both very beneficial for employment), but also for the matching of energy sources to their appropriate end-uses. A major example here is the elimination of electricity for heating, for which it is inefficient. A recent study, *Energy Future*, by Harvard Business School team, should be required reading for policy makers. It opts decisively for conservation (plus small solar technologies) as the most sensible economic, financially, economically and politically. As growth of energy demand has already slackened more than economic growth, only an irrational inflation with nuclear power—Thatcher's syndrome?—can lead to priority for stepping up supply rather than pursuit of overall energy efficiency to restrain demand.

Yours faithfully,
M. M. WATSON,
Faculty of Economic and Social Studies,
University of Wales,
Aberystwyth.

Revenue powers of search and entry

From Mr Peter Hordern, MP for Harlow and Crawley (Conservative)
Sir, The decision by the Law Lords to overturn the judgment of the Court of Appeal with regard to the Inland Revenue's rights of search and entry, raises serious issues. Lord Wilberforce, in the course of giving judgment for the Revenue, said that the defendants "had not been told what the precise nature of the fraud was, when it had been committed, or by whom it had been committed. In the case of a bank, rights and liberties of the subject? Yours faithfully,
PETER HORDERN,
House of Commons,
December 14.

But Parliament's role in this matter has been ambivalent to say the least. When these powers were originally introduced by the last Conservative Government in relation to VAT, they were opposed by the Labour Opposition and by two Conservative MPs. The Opposition was strongly formed at that time by letters to your newspaper from the President of the Law Society and the Chairman of the Bar Council, protesting vigorously against the nature of these powers. By the time the Labour Party took office, it introduced the same measures on behalf of the Inland Revenue as it had itself opposed in relation to Customs and Excise. For its part, the Conservative Party in opposition opposed the measures which it had formerly supported.

The position therefore is that every MP, Conservative and Labour, with now but one exception, who served the House between 1970 and 1979, voted both for these powers and against them. It seems to me that this is a profoundly unsatisfactory base to found a law which confers upon the Revenue powers to break into a man's home and take what papers it likes without saying either then, or months later, what is the nature of the supposed offence.

Charter 77 appeals

From Professor Frantisek Janouch
Sir, On December 20 the Supreme Court of the Czech Socialist Republic will hear the appeal in the case of Mr Petr Uhl and five other Charter 77 signatories and active members of the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS) who had previously been sentenced to terms of imprisonment of up to five years.

One of the fundamental principles of the Czechoslovak judicial system is that proceedings take place in public (Article 103 of the Czechoslovak Constitution). VONS activities consist of collecting and publishing information about police persecution and verdicts which, in the committee's view, infringe Czechoslovak laws or are unjust. According to the Czechoslovak Criminal Code, such activities cannot be the basis of any criminal offence.

Moreover, the activities of the accused were in full accord with the right to petition guaranteed by Article 29 of the Czechoslovak Constitution. This provision gives the right to individual citizens, or groups of citizens, to voice their opinions and tender submissions to the authorities. Nothing in Czechoslovak legislation prevents petitions from being made public.

The Prague trial also dealt with and condemned the financial assistance provided to the Czechoslovak political and police persecution by solidarity committees abroad.

The Charter 77 Foundation was established on the basis of the

I do not doubt that the Revenue has an exceedingly difficult task in carrying out its duty to the public. But Parliament has an even more important task to see, in the words of Lord Denning, that its laws "encroach as little as possible upon the liberties of England". In view of the quite unsatisfactory Parliamentary history of this law, should not a Royal Commission be appointed to recommend what should be the powers available to the Revenue properly to carry out its duty, while safeguarding the rights and liberties of the subject? Yours faithfully,
PETER HORDERN,
House of Commons,
December 14.

From Mr Graham Don
Sir, Your correspondent Mr Newbold (December 15) should realize that his boundless admiration for those heroic guardians of British liberty—the fringe gentlemen who labour so manfully helping the rich to fiddle their income tax returns—is not universally shared. Nor is his case helped by wide-eyed declarations of innocence, "It's perfectly legal, you know". That was Shylock's argument and his reputation has gained nothing by it. Of course it is legal; the tax fiddler who gives his address as Wormwood Scrubs is unlikely to reach the top of his profession.

The line between tax avoidance which is legal and tax evasion which is criminal is inevitably a fine one and the Inland Revenue authorities, acting on behalf of ordinary law-abiding tax payers who actually part with the cash on demand, deserve our unstinted support.

The cry of liberty ought not to be invoked when it means the liberty of always leaving the other fellow to pay the bill. Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM DON,
14 Colina Close,
Bletchley,
Buckinghamshire,
December 15.

Swedish Cultural Movements Prize, awarded to Charter 77 in December, 1978. The foundation provides financial help on humanitarian principles to dozens of families. Cultural, religious, trade union, socialist and other democratic organizations and individuals in Europe made donations to the foundation. The aid is provided impartially, regardless of the alleged criminal, political, religious or cultural activities of the convicted persons.

Our only aim, and this clearly applies also to all other solidarity committees, is to alleviate the plight of hundreds of people who are jailed, dismissed from work or otherwise persecuted for their opinions.

People in the West often do not realize that in Czechoslovakia persons not employed as a result of their political views do not receive any unemployment benefit, either from the state or from the trade unions, and that families of people serving sentences have no income whatsoever, not even children's allowance.

Since the financial help provided by the Charter 77 Foundation is remitted invariably legally, through the banks, such remittances being approved by the Czechoslovak authorities, this strictly humanitarian action in no way infringes Czechoslovak laws.

FRANTISEK JANOUCH,
Chairman of the Board of Trustees,
Charter 77 Foundation,
Bergsgatan 62/11,
S-183 64 Taby,
Sweden,
December 17.

Research is only one aspect of the work of the PSSC. It has undertaken wide-ranging consultations with groups representing the elderly, the mentally ill, the physically handicapped, children in care and families of serving soldiers.

The transfer of certain Council functions to other bodies will not remedy the damage done if it is closed. The users of personal social services include many of the most vulnerable members of our society. Their needs are complex and varied. The loss of the only independent advisory Council which represents their interests and monitors the services which they receive is bound to jeopardize the considerable advances which have been made.

The short-term savings in expenditure will be minimal; the Council's budget for next year has been set at £214,000. The longer-term costs of closure could be far greater.

We urge the Minister to think again. Yours faithfully,
ROBERT PINKER, B. ABEL-SMITH (London School of Economics), A. COLLIS (Birmingham), B. DAVIES (Kent), M. DAVIES (East Anglia), V. GEORGE (Kent), F. MARKER (Glasgow), G. PLOWMAN (LSE), J. H. SMITH (Southampton), A. WEBB (Loughborough), A. J. WILLCOCKS (Nottingham),
London School of Economics,
Roughley Street, WC2,
December 12.

From Mr J. P. de Blocq van Kuffeler and Mr C. R. Baird
Sir, Your correspondent, Mr Tom Putnam (December 17), has forgotten the essential ingredient of the defences against which Sir Barnes Wallis was pitting his wits: anti-torpedo nets.

I would like to suggest that a series of strategically placed loops would give the correct effect for your correspondent to attempt his next series of trials. Yours faithfully,
J. P. DE BLOCC VAN KUFFELER
C. R. BAIRD,
23 Fenchurch Street, EC3,
December 17.

Taking action against Iran

From Lord Lever of Manchester
Sir, Your leading article on Monday is wrong in implying that I argued in *The Sunday Times* that Britain should unilaterally freeze all Iranian assets in this country or that failure to do so would mean giving Iran freedom to default with impunity on its liabilities. My article was focused, not upon the question of hostages, but specifically on the dangers to the world monetary system and to world trade and politics which arose from the Iranian threat to renege their balances, convert them to the injury of the dollar and default at will upon their debts.

I argued that the Americans had little choice but to act as they did and that we should not undermine their action by placing British courts in the position where they have to order American banks to hand over dollars which their own law forbids them to pay.

I argued, too, that the US action was no breach of banking or commercial integrity in view of the threat directed at them but was required for the protection of their banking system, its depositors and customers.

I urged unambiguous political support for an American action which was also protective of the international monetary system, whose fragility was well documented in the perceptive article by your Financial Editor in today's *Times* and for cooperative international action in support of the cause of international law and order in this area.

You say: "We simply cannot afford to let the rest of the world think that the money deposited with us is at the mercy of political decisions by the British Government." But can the leading powers afford to be passive or divided in the face of the political decisions of Iran which threaten the security of the banking system, depositors' money and parity stability? The more general implications of such an attitude must be obvious.

The Iranian Finance Minister, Mr Bani-Sadr, has threatened to make us pay very dearly if we interfere in the Iranian conflict with the US. He takes what he regards as an anti-Iranian stance. I feel that rather than justifying its title "New York to support America", your leading article may be taken as reinforcing Mr Bani-Sadr's threat.

Yours faithfully,
LORD LEVER,
House of Lords,
December 18.

London's third airport

From Mr R. A. Vallance
Sir, Standed was the quickest of the cheaper sites to develop, but are these alone reasons for imposing a major airport there? After all, there are no other good reasons.

Standed is in an area of prime agricultural land, with no provision for real people's needs. Urbanization there would be totally at odds with planning considerations. Too many people live near by and would suffer excessively from a major increase in the airport's use. There is no unemployment problem. It is an area of rolling, largely unspoiled, countryside.

These factors were paramount when the last two inquiries rejected Standed. There is no reason to doubt that a new inquiry will reach the same conclusion.

If the area and expense are such overriding considerations, the Government can save both if only it will accept that, because there has been no change in the area, a third inquiry can only reject Standed yet again.

Yours faithfully,
R. A. VALLANCE,
Langley/Nuthampstead Preservation Association,
The Old Bell,
Langley Upper Green,
Langley,
Surrey,
Essex,
December 18.

Smoking in public

From Mr Peter Kelly
Sir, In his efforts to understand why people were not attracted to socialism as he thought they should be, George Orwell remarked that socialism draws towards itself "even fruit-juice drinkers, nudists, sandal-wearers, sex-maniacs, Quakers, nature-cure quacks, pacifists and feminists in England".

Surely this is the point that Mr Levin is making with regard to the anti-smoking movement. What began as a sound medical argument, based on sound data, has become the preserve of fire-breathing moralists who see themselves as waging a war against something which is intrinsically evil rather than something which is bad for one's health.

And this is tragic because in time the anti-smokers will make themselves look so ridiculous that they will be laughed at even by every non-smoking compartment in the land. Yours faithfully,
PETER KELLY,
65 Judd Road,
Tonbridge,
Kent,
December 13.

Taking cycles by rail

From Mr Peter H. Ellacoy
Sir, As the increasing number of cyclists on the roads testifies to an effort to limit pollution, save fuel and keep fit, surely British Rail should be thinking of adding an extra van to transport bicycles rather than refusing to take them?

Yours faithfully,
PETER ELLACROY,
10 Basing Close,
Thames Ditton,
Surrey.

Wolfgang Amadeus Loscy

From Miss P. M. Johnston
Sir, If God chose Mozart, may we presume that perhaps He chose also Loscy's truly.
Yours truly,
PATRICIA M. JOHNSTON,
3 Copthall Avenue, EC3.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA'S LAST WEEKS

now to business. The sign-ceremony at Lancaster House on 10 January is the start of the hazardous stage in Southern Rhodesia in a state of war to civil peace. The present level of hostilities on the British timetable of week-to-week ceasefire, and talk to becoming effective, by a hundred more lives to be lost, and while British presence on a short timetable psychologically right, few see the shooting to end and rely in that period.

Mr Mugabe's forebodings that all take ten weeks or more to his units operating and them moving towards their main areas suggests the loss of his high command's kroll rather than their remoteness. Quite apart from more sophisticated communications, bush telegraph is very effective.

The "boys in the bush" in close contact with tribes and villagers. Most of the only two anxious for shooting to stop and the continued pressure of a pointed gun to ease. The word will out, and when it has gone out, orders that emanate from Patriotic Front's representatives on the Ceasefire Committee will have to be acknowledged and obeyed—or defied. It is the task of the monitoring to help the Zanu and Zanu leaders personally to tell the Zanu and Zanu cadres to obey. It may be glad to.

Inevitably arms will be hidden and many guerrillas (especially those who have not fired a shot) will not assemble but will carry on indistinguishably as election agents. The same will be true, the other way round, with Bishop Muzorewa's and Mr Sithole's semi-armed auxiliaries. The main problem for the monitoring force is to keep them unarmed. It is useless to suppose the election will be anything but rough; the precedents in Africa are clear. But, as was implicitly accepted at Lusaka, and no doubt in the United Nations, this is to be an acceptable blunder in "free and fair" elections in Africa.

To project such realities on to the map of Rhodesia is to define the smallness of the monitoring force in terms of even the absolute minimum required of it. Twelve hundred men in a country twice the size of Britain, ignorant of the African vernaculars and unfamiliar with African customs—probably also with problems from ingrained white attitudes—and working in the worst season for travel is almost heroically few. It is in the highest tradition of the army. It should be said that if, as events develop, Lord Soames and General Acland feel imminent success is jeopardized for want of some hundreds more, the British public should accept the need.

Not only have the assembly areas to be monitored, but the disengagement of the Salisbury

regulars; and also the daily law and order operations of the British South Africa Police. These must be seen to be under surveillance if suspicion is to be met on the other side and mischievous scotch. The monitors have to generate confidence out of distrust. They have two advantages however. It seems now that the Patriotic Front at last feels it will do very well in legitimate elections, while the other side are resigned to the fact that to frustrate them would be finally fatal.

The Governor may be helped by other influences. Zambia is getting its maize, Mozambique its respite. Sanctions are off; the prospects of investment offer an inducement to stability to all except Marxists. For the whites, and perhaps for many anti-Patriotic Front blacks, there may be a calming sense of security in a sojourn under the British flag, for they may feel that it entitles them to protection and asylum if things go ill for them.

Lord Soames's greatest prize will be to hand over a Zimbabwe in which all ex-enemies can live together. That is a far-off goal. Immediately Britain has proved as good as its word given in Lusaka; therefore fourteen years of being put in the dock by African extremists and of providing propaganda willy-nilly to the Communist hegemony is over. For this, warm tributes are due to Mrs Thatcher and Lord Carrington.

The PLO and Palestine

From Mr Patrick Cosgrave
Sir, In his article today (December 8) Mr Edward Mortimer quotes Mr Khalid al-Hassan as exemplifying and stating the supposed policy of the PLO to create a secular and democratic state in Palestine by "peaceful and democratic" means. This is the same emphasis he gave to his earlier report in your columns on the Jerusalem seminar which Mr al-Hassan addressed. Further, Mr Mortimer takes pains in this morning's article to warn the Western powers of the danger of failing to encourage such secular trends in Arab politics as are represented by Mr al-Hassan less they may thereby unwittingly lend strength to "an opposition far more fanatical and implacable" in the shape of a resurgent Islam.

On February 11 last Mr Yasser Arafat wrote to the Ayalatallah Khameini and said: "I pray Allah to guide your steps on the road of faith and jihad (holy war) in Iran, which will continue the struggle until we reach the walls of Jerusalem, where we will raise the flags of our revolution." As the leader of the PLO, Mr Arafat may be presumed accurately to represent its policies; and his are hardly the words of a secular democrat.

But then, I am more surprised to find Mr Mortimer supporting secularism than I would be to find him supporting Mr Arafat and the Ayalatallah. His enthusiasm—indeed, one might almost say fanaticism—for the Ayalatallah and his revolution is well known to those who have read his outpourings in *The Spectator* on the subject.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK COSGRAVE,
118 Kyrle Road, SW11,
December 8.

Put out by a cab driver

From Mr D. M. Murison
Sir, There must be no other major city in the world where a taxi driver would put a young girl out of his cab in a deserted street at midnight. This is what one of your London cabbies did to my 15-year-old daughter last night at the Angel, several blocks from her house, because she was not clear how to direct him to her street. She had been in England one week; the cabbie, one presumes, lives here.

Of course, she should have taken his number; refused to pay or refused to get out. However, she walked home through streets that no one here goes alone in at night. My host had assured me that London cabbies are the best in the world. I assure you that they are the most irresponsible.

Yours faithfully,
D. M. MURISON,
31 Allington Street, N1.

Milking the dairy

From Mr David Green
Sir, I do not know whether it is otherwise recorded but in these parts, where milk bottle tops are not as common as they are in Tom Hey's (December 12), Blue Tits and Great Tits regularly strip off the tops of newly glazed windows, presumably for the linned oil which it contains. I cannot say that this adaptation is any more welcome than their interest in butterfat. Yours faithfully,
DAVID GREEN,
Rydal, Huddersfield,
Castle Morris,
Nr Haverfordwest,
December 12.

Without fear or favour

From Mr D. C. Damant
The fact that professional skills dangerously diminished by acts of punishment in the event failure was recognized by the House of Commons, advised the doctor, and the Emperor at the birth of a child that he should imagine self delivering a slur in the streets of Paris.

Yours faithfully,
D. DAMANT,
Orchard Street,
Stridge.

Living freedom

From Mr W. H. Edwards
In man's effort to define freedom, does he not limit it and, before, in limiting it does he not try it?

m. Sir, your obedient servant,
H. EDWARDS,
dige House,
ypandy,
ondda, Glamorganshire.

Insisted places scheme

in the Headmaster of Abingdon
100
Sir Desmond Lee (December 17) refers in his letter on the insisted places scheme to a resolution passed by the Headmasters' Conference in September of this year, and suggests that it demonstrates the unanimity of independent schools in favour of it. The full wording of that resolution, however, makes it clear that the Conference was voting in favour of the general principle that assistance should be made available to pupils with special educational needs, on a basis that could be complementary to the school's own provision.

The general support given to this

motion did not adequately mirror the quality of the actual proposal, proposed places scheme, and at would be to place the heads of independent schools in a position to entertain serious reservations about the desirability and practicality of that scheme at the House of Commons.

Yours faithfully,
M. ST JOHN PARKER, Headmaster,
Abingdon School,
Oxfordshire.

From Mr E. D. Roberts
Sir, It is to be hoped that your readers will not be misled by a statement in Sir Desmond Lee's letter (The Times, December 10) into thinking that "the scheme applies only to day pupils"; it can apply to boarders as well.

The scheme applies to tuition fees and we have been informed officially that "participation agreements" of schooling with boarding places might provide for the offer of a limited number of assisted places to pupils whose boarding fees was met from other sources, such as the school's own bursary fund.

Another source of assistance with the boarding fee is a grant from a local education authority. If the scheme has had a poor reception this may be due in part to a failure to take account simultaneously towards enabling children to receive a boarding education to receive it. Some of these children may merit assisted places but there are others whose needs are no less important and for whom the help available from charitable funds and increasingly from school bursary funds is unlikely to be sufficient.

Yours faithfully,
E. D. ROBERTS,
Secretary,
Board of Management for Methodist Residential Schools,
25 Marylebone Road, NW1.

autious step
to the
clear age
age 17

THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

Rhodesia looks
to year
of growth
page 16

Stock markets

FT Ind 421.3, down 0.18
FT 615 65.10, down 0.18

Sterling

\$2.1985, unchanged
Index 69.6, down 0.1

Dollar

Index 85.4, up 0.1

Gold

\$479.5 an ounce, up \$8.5

3-month money

Inter-bank 16 1/16 to 16 1/8
Euro-3 14 1/2 to 15

IN BRIEF

Piran ces ficial quiry

The Department of Trade will be an official inquiry into the affairs of St Piran, the mine and property group. The inquiry will be led by Mr Gerald Reid, QC, and Mr Alan Ikin, an accountant with Marwick Mitchell. The inquiry will be held at the company's offices in London on Friday and after a departmental inquiry under section 165 of the 1948 Companies Act allows for a general investigation of a company's affairs, and under section 172 in some cases, which is conducted with beneficial shareholders.

paid tax rates up
Interest rates on unpaid tax to be increased on January 180, from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. Interest on unpaid duty rises from 6 per cent to 10 per cent. Interest on arrears of tax deposit was cut last Monday from 16 1/2 per cent.

British loans

The European Investment Bank has lent £150,000 for a project in Scotland. In Dundee, £110,000 has been lent to the Shetland Islands Council to build the new at Sullom Voe, to the North Sea oil. Hiram and Sons (Scotland) Ltd for a whisky bottling plant.

ld at fresh peak

Gold closed at a new record of \$495 an ounce in London on 8470 on Monday. Some of the East Asian currencies, dollar holdings for gold, and exchange markets were rally quiet.

yd's changes

Colin Thomas, secretary of the Lloyd's insurance, is to give up the post in 1981. The company is expected to announce sweeping changes in Lloyd's disciplinary rules and statutes on self-regulation next spring.

er textile workers

Textile industry employees by 5 per cent over the 12 months to November, according to a Textile Statistics Bureau workforce fell by a further 10 per cent in October, bringing the decline to 3,600. There is little change in activity for the year.

our TV sales up

Four television sales in the last 10 months of this year, rising to the British Radio and Television Manufacturers Association (BREMA).

rysler deal agreed

A productivity deal worth £6.5m was accepted yesterday by 4,000 manual workers in the engine plant of Chrysler in Coventry.

il Street falls

All Street closed 5.97 points down to 336.65 on trading in 10,000 shares.

Petrol price rises on way as Opec meeting draws to end without agreement

From Nicholas Hirst, Caracas, Dec 18

The meeting of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries in Caracas may break up without reaching any agreement on a structure for fixing prices next year.

There seems a real possibility that the discussions could go into a third day as the Saudi Arabians, led by the Saudi Arabian oil minister, and the Libyans, led by the Libyan oil minister, are as wide as ever.

Any agreement now can only involve so wide a spread of prices—with Saudi Arabia settling for \$24 a barrel and the Libyans for \$34 a barrel or more—that it would simply be a papering over of the deep cracks which have emerged between Opec member countries.

Whatever happens, there is bound to be a sharp increase in the cost of oil next year. The average price could go up by between 20 per cent and 30 per cent, putting more than 7p on a gallon of petrol.

The chances of North Sea oil prices topping \$30 a barrel in the new year strengthened when Mr A. K. Hart, the Nigerian oil minister, indicated his country would follow Libya in charging \$30 a barrel for crude oil.

Mr Hart said it was "not unlikely" that Nigeria would align its prices with Libya and added that an increase to \$30 was "an inference" which "could be drawn".

But Nigeria may end up with an even higher price. The Libyans are pressing for a base price of \$34 for all Opec grades and Algeria has indicated it would support a price of between \$30 and \$35.

These three grades are similar to North Sea oil and their price is used by the British National Oil Corporation (now charging \$22.42 for all of next year).

It is becoming more and more clear just how slim is the chance of any agreement on a price structure. In an interview with an American television network, Khalifa Al Thani, the Qatar oil minister, said he intended to hold the price of Qatar's crude oil raised to \$36 last week, to \$42 for all of next year.

Iraq, traditionally an Opec pricing "hawk", has become a strong moderating force. Mr. Ezedin Ali Mubruk, oil minister, explained that it had been a mistake to allow the increase in real terms of prices fixed after the Yom Kippur War in 1974.



Mr Ali Akbar Moftakar, the Iranian oil minister, in Caracas.

He said the situation favoured no one and he wanted a unified moderate price to be fixed in the interest of both producing and consuming countries.

Threat of halt to growth rate

By Caroline Atkinson

Oil price rises could bring Western economic growth to a halt next year, according to reports from Paris.

These say that sources close to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development expect the OECD to forecast a 1 per cent growth next year in the industrialized world. This takes no account of the impact of oil price rises, which could lead to stagnation.

Every 10 per cent rise in the

price of oil means a 0.3 per cent off the OECD growth rate, according to some expert calculations. Higher oil prices could push the OECD countries' \$45,000m (about £22,000m) into their combined balance of payments next year.

Although Britain is to some extent insulated from the worst effects of dearer oil by output, the rise in the price will leave the United Kingdom worse off on balance. This is partly because Britain is not yet self-sufficient

in oil, so the extra cost of dearer imports outweighs the extra benefit from higher-priced exports.

In addition Britain is hit by the slowdown in world trade and output that results from higher oil prices.

British officials are anxious to dispel the impression among some EEC partners that the United Kingdom has done well out of recent oil price rises and stands to gain from further increases.

Japan refuses to boycott Iran goods

From Peter Hazell, Tokyo, Dec 18

Japan will refuse to comply with any American request for a boycott of Iranian goods. This clear-cut message was presented to Mr Robert Carwell, the United States Deputy Secretary for the Treasury, who returned to Washington after meeting Mr Masayoshi Ohira, the Japanese prime minister, and other senior members of the cabinet yesterday.

However, the Japanese said that they would do as much as possible to help the United States in its efforts to secure the release of the hostages in Tehran.

During the past two days, Mr Carwell has told Japanese leaders that sanctions against Iran would hurt the United States' allies and main trading partners in Europe and Asia, and refused to participate in the proposed boycott.

Last week Japan assured the United States that Japanese oil companies have been instructed to refrain from making large purchases of Iranian oil at high prices.

The assurance was issued in response to complaints that Japanese oil companies bought more than 10 million barrels of high-priced Iranian oil on the spot market after America halted imports of Iranian oil last month.

Japan has claimed that the additional oil is needed because the international oil companies have decreased Japan's quota of crude.

But the issue touched off an angry outcry in Washington when it was learnt that Japanese companies had bought large quantities of Iranian oil to third countries. This was described in Washington as "insensitive action".

Japan had decided that it would continue to import Iranian oil, but oil companies would no longer buy at high prices on the spot market, an official said.

Credit Lyonnais to free assets

The Credit Lyonnais has agreed to unfreeze the \$18m of Iranian assets it has been freezing "at its subsidiary at Sadat in the Bahamas".

The money on deposit from Sadat, the Iranian Commercial Bank, had been frozen after the decision by the Carter administration on November 14. Sadat's Iran started proceedings to free it in December 4 against the Credit Lyonnais, the first non-American bank to be legally pursued.

Preferential supplies of gas for industry to end

By John Huxley

Industrial users will no longer get preferential treatment with guaranteed supplies of gas at low rates from next year.

A "panic flight from oil" this year has resulted in a huge surge demand which has caused problems for British Gas.

It had asked the Government to amend the Energy Act, which stipulates that it must continue to supply gas to industrial customers which had contracts before 1976. This had prevented British Gas from raising industrial gas prices to levels competitive with oil.

Customers with contracts could instead be buying supplies at industrial gas rates. The corporation felt that contract prices for larger customers should be 4p or 5p a therm higher.

And now Mr David Howell, Secretary of State for Energy, has announced that legislation in the new year would limit all

statutory entitlements to gas supply to 25,000 therms a year. Provision will be made for the corporation to enter into contractual agreements for supplies above that level.

The new requirement will give British Gas greater flexibility in controlling off-take of gas at peak demand.

It had been felt that customers with contracts before 1976 were being given preferential treatment because of the Energy Act.

In the past eight months, the corporation has been turning away about three times more business than it has been taking on, and entering into few new contracts with industrial and commercial customers.

Sir Denis Rooke, the corporation's chairman, said recently that additional supplies were being made available where a statutory obligation existed (that is to those within 25 years of an existing supply main).

White paper on public spending is delayed

By Caroline Atkinson

The Government's search for public spending cuts has led to a significant delay in the publication of its next spending White Paper. This was to cover spending in the years 1981-82 to 1983-84.

The delay is due to be published early in the New Year.

However the Government has now admitted that it does not expect publication until March. In answer to a written question yesterday, Mr John Biffen, Chief Secretary of the Treasury, said that the Government was "continuing to examine some of the policy issues relating to public expenditure" although it intended to publish the White Paper as soon as possible.

The hold-up has come because ministers have had to reopen the decisions embodied in the last spending White Paper, financial plan, which was published in November. This was for next year, 1980-81, only.

It provided for a stabilization in the level of spending between the current financial year and next. However the dismal prospects for the economy have led to a desperate search in Whitehall for spending cuts next year.

This is taking precedence over the work on the spending plans for later years. Until recently these were thought likely to project a fall of 1 per cent a year in the volume of spending.

There is some opposition in Whitehall to frequent chopping and changing of public spending plans. It is likely that spending on transfer payments, such as Social Security benefits, will bear the brunt of the cuts in 1981. It is very late to change programmes for spending on goods and services.

The next spending White Paper will now be published very near the time of the Budget. If there is to be a medium-term financial plan, which is increasingly unlikely, it will be announced at the same time.

City watchdog criticizes tempo of DoT inquiries

Slow going in corridors of power

Too much time is taken completing Department of Trade investigations and making any necessary prosecutions, says the City's watchdog body.

"The present tempo is quite unacceptable... and the system must be altered with a view to securing quicker results", the CSI suggests.

Its report—which appears just as Mr John Nott, the present Trade Secretary, has ordered his first Department of Trade inquiry—into St Piran—makes a number of recommendations.

It identifies the two main criticisms of the present system as the time taken to complete investigations and institute prosecutions, and allegations of unfairness towards witnesses

who appear before the department's inspectors.

The CSI says that, while the inquisitorial character of inspectors should be retained, changes should be made to give greater protection to those who appear before them.

As an experiment it wants to see two full-time legal inspectors appointed, recruited from suitably experienced barristers and solicitors, to take, with accountants, heavy cases likely to involve a substantial workload. And part-time inspectors should be appointed from a list of suitably experienced, personnel drawn up by a panel consisting of a QC, a City solicitor, a banker and an accountant.

On the question of timing, the CSI suggests that the Secretary of State should indicate

when he appoints inspectors the time in which they are expected to complete their report. In the ordinary case this should be fixed at six months.

To safeguard witnesses the CSI wants to be told in advance and in reasonable detail about the matters and documents about which they will be examined. They should also be told the nature of any criticisms that the inspectors propose putting in their report and the specific evidence on which the criticisms are based.

Witnesses would be given a chance to offer comments on the CSI wants inspectors to stick to the facts and let them speak for themselves.

Financial Editor, page 17
Andrew Goodrick-Clarke

Unit trust industry will be free to decide upon its own level of charges from today

By Margaret Stone

Unit trust charges are to be deregulated at midday today. The Unit Trust Association, after years of campaigning, has persuaded the Department of Trade to scrap the 20-year-old pricing structure. Unit trusts will be free to decide its own level of charges.

In May this year, the new Conservative Government showed that it was basically in favour of relinquishing its statutory control of charges, so long as certain safeguards were maintained. This stance contrasted the view of the Price Commission, which in January had argued that despite its drawbacks, the

present pricing formula represented the best compromise. The existing level of charges is governed by the 1958 Prevention of Fraud Act which laid down the present two-tier price structure. Unit trusts were allowed to charge a maximum initial fee of 5 per cent of the value of units bought, with an annual charge which with the initial fee, could not exceed 13 1/2 per cent spread over 20 years.

This meant that if the group charged the maximum initial fee of 5 per cent, it was restricted to an annual management charge of 1 per cent, or it could charge 3 1/2 per cent initial and 1 per cent annually. In later years, most manage-

ment companies have preferred to go for the heavier initial charge, placing an undue emphasis on new sales. In expectation of the new freedom, several unit trust groups have been launching funds with the proviso that managers reserved the right to come back to unitholders and secure a revised scale of annual charges.

Most managers are expected to opt for a doubling in the annual charge to 3 per cent from 1 per cent, although the annual fee may rise to 1 per cent for some specialist funds. This is what newsmen Fidelity International Management is suggesting for its American Growth trust.

Apart from the prospect of increased profitability, and perhaps more day-to-day concentration on fund investment management than marketing—the industry's 85 or so management groups are relieved that the Unit Trust Association has not been hauled in front of the Restrictive Practices Court, as at one time seemed likely, to explain its uniform pricing structure. The news comes as a fillip to the unit trust industry, which yesterday reported that purchases, for the second time this year, exceeded new sales. This left the industry with a net outflow of £1.6m compared to net sales of £4.7m in October and £12.4m the previous November.

Sizewell likely site of new power station

By Kenneth Owen

Technology Editor

The Central Electricity Generating Board will issue a letter of intent early in the New Year to the National Nuclear Corporation which will enable the company to adopt the Westinghouse design for a Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR) in a new nuclear power station likely to be built at Sizewell in Suffolk.

This will be one of the most immediate results of the announcement yesterday by Mr David Howell, Secretary of State for Energy, that the Government aims to move forward with a nuclear programme of about 15,000 megawatts over ten years from 1982.

"Subject to obtaining the necessary consents and safety clearances, the generating board said, 'The CEB intends to order a PWR as soon as possible'."

Mr Howell's statement that the Government believed there must be continuing nuclear power station orders if Britain's long-term energy supplies were to be secured and current industrial uncertainties resolved, was welcomed last night both by the CEB and by the CEGB.

Mr Jim Stewart, chairman of the British Nuclear Forum, an

association of companies in the nuclear industry, said: "Readily available supplies of cheap electrical energy are important to the well-being of this country, and in recognition of this the nuclear industry will bend its efforts to securing safe, economical and reliable nuclear power stations."

"Its ability to do so will be greatly enhanced by a reasonably steady ordering programme."

The CEGB said that nuclear power would need to make a substantial contribution to filling the energy gap that was likely to develop. Additional nuclear power now was also likely to help contain rises in the cost of producing electricity that would inevitably result from higher oil and coal prices.

On the choice of the design between AGR and PWR types of power station for the ten-year programme, the CEGB said it was pleased that the Government had reaffirmed a commitment to a strategy which gave a choice between "two proven reactor systems".

The board added: "It is premature to choose between them, and it is not inconceivable that there will be a place for both for many years ahead."

The board would announce



Mr David Howell, Secretary of State for Energy: statement welcomed both by the nuclear industry and the CEGB.

the selection of the site for the first PWR shortly, "so that those most directly concerned can prepare for the public inquiry, which is likely to be in 1981". Sizewell was the most likely candidate at this stage.

Speaking as deputy chairman of the Nuclear Power Company, the operating arm of the National Nuclear Corporation, Mr Jim Stewart said he had

always considered that the PWR was the cheaper system of the two now under consideration.

John Huxley writes: Mr Marcus Bower, a director of Northern Engineering Industries, last night welcomed the report as ending years of uncertainty. He hoped that future governments would honour the commitment made by Mr Howell.

CEGB poised for Australian uranium stake

By Michael Prest

The Central Electricity Generating Board is close to obtaining its first direct stake in an overseas uranium deposit.

The stake, if agreement is reached, will be in the Ranger deposit in Australia. CEGB's move coincides with forecasts of increased uranium demand by the United Kingdom after the Government's announcement of its plans to press ahead with building nuclear power stations.

The Ranger deposit, in the Northern Territory, is one of the country's major known deposits. The Australian government announced yesterday that it was to sell its 50 per cent interest in Ranger to Peko-Wallend, an Australian

mining and industrial company. Peko already has 25 per cent of the deposit with the rest in the hands of Electrolytic Zinc, another Australian company.

The Australian government's sale will be to a new company, Energy Resources Australia, set up by Peko to hold its 75 per cent of Ranger. The other 25 per cent in ERA will be divided between four Japanese utilities, a West German one, and the CEGB.

It is understood that the European stake, including the CEGB's, will total about half the foreign utilities' interest in Ranger.

The value of the purchase is not known, nor is the price offered by Peko to the Australian government, except that Peko has offered a premium

of A\$125m (662.5m) on execution of a firm contract.

The CEGB is also understood to be talking to uranium producers in Canada, the United States, and Africa about taking stakes in their mines. In the past the board has relied on normal supplier contracts. But after, as one source put it, "burning its fingers" on supplies from the politically controversial Rossing mine in Namibia, the CEGB has looked for more secure sources.

Buying stakes in uranium producers brings the added benefit of profits from the mines. Ranger's progress towards its planned output of 2,550 tonnes by the end of 1981 was delayed when the Australian labour government acquired its 50 per cent

stake in 1974. The Aboriginal Lands Act, designed to protect ancestral lands, resulted in protracted negotiations before agreement was reached last year to proceed with Ranger. Development of the deposit was put in November at A\$314m.

One of the conditions of participation by foreign utilities is that they sign sales contracts big enough to ensure the mine's financial security as soon as production begins.

The new development is expected to be the sale by the Australian government of its 41.6 per cent in Mary Kathleen Uranium, the country's only operating uranium mine, in which Rio-Tinto Zinc has an indirect holding. MKU's profit in 1978 was A\$7,070,000 from 608 tonnes of uranium produced.

Norcros Limited Interim Report

Good cash flow strengthens growth prospects

JOHN V. SHEFFIELD, CHAIRMAN, REPORTS:

- Interim dividend up 12%
- UK sales up 12.7%: Overseas up 23%
- Capital expenditure highest yet

Financial summary of the half year to September 30, 1979:

	1979-80 Half year £'000	1978-79 Half year £'000	Full year £'000
Group Sales (including share of Associate company sales)	143,940	126,548	274,890
United Kingdom sales	92,381	81,965	181,953
Exports	12,858	13,457	28,089
Overseas companies sales	30,835	25,066	51,138
Pre Tax surplus	8,017	8,213	20,069
Earnings per Ordinary Share	Per share 5.27p	Per share 4.69p	Per share 12.22p
Dividend per Ordinary Share	Per share 1.96p	Per share 1.75p	Per share 4.93p
External sales per employee	£14,283	£13,022	£13,504

*Comparative results for the half year to September 30, 1978 have been adjusted as if the merger with H & R Johnson-Richards Tiles Limited had taken place one year earlier.

Copies of the Interim report are available from:
The Company Secretary,
Norcros Limited, Reading Bridge House,
Reading, Berks. RG1 8PP.

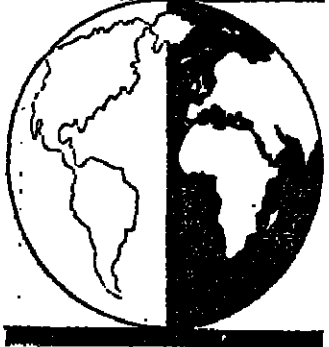


THE POUND

	Bank buy	Bank sell	Bank buy	Bank sell
trials	2.02	1.96	11.36	10.86
Irish Sch	29.00	27.80	112.50	107.50
Irish Sch	60.00	58.00	144.00	139.00
Irish Sch	6.02	5.82	151.00	144.00
Irish Sch	12.23	11.68	9.50	9.10
Irish Sch	8.48	8.08	3.71	3.49
Irish Sch	8.23	7.83	5.25	4.95
Irish Sch	3.39	3.27	48.50	45.50
Irish Sch	97.00	92.00		
Irish Sch	11.25	10.65		
Irish Sch	1855.00	1750.00		
Irish Sch	533.00	528.00		
Irish Sch	4.39	4.16		

PRICE CHANGES

PRICE CHANGES			
Oil & Gas	10p to 215p	Imp Chem Ind	2p to 355p
Crude	15p to 124p	Imp Cont Gas	10p to 620p
Refined	6p to 55p	Lubricants	7p to 140p
Gas	2p to 254p	MTD Manganese	7p to 113p
Electric Corp	15p to 624p	Pixtons	7p to 175p



Pressure on Congress to speed up Chrysler aid

The United States Congress is under intense pressure, before it goes into recess at the end of this week, to complete legislation for the rescue of the Chrysler Corporation.

Chrysler could go bankrupt unless Congress acted swiftly, majority leader, said he expected Congress to approve a rescue plan for the ailing car company.

Mr. Thomas O'Neill, speaker of the House of Representatives, said he was no longer confident there was sufficient time for Congress to act.

Mr. Lee Iacocca, Chrysler's chairman, said an additional \$100m (about £45m) in short-term financing must be provided by the Government to avoid a cash crisis in mid-January.

A Chrysler Bill is passed this week it may well involve roughly \$1,200m of Government loan guarantees contingent upon \$2,000m or more of unguaranteed bank loans to Chrysler and upon a partial wage freeze at the company.

Greek aircraft plant

An aircraft repair and maintenance factory, representing an investment of £150m, was inaugurated by Mr. Constantine Karamanlis, the Greek Prime Minister, at Tanagra, 40 miles north of Athens.

Store chain accused

Trade unionists from four European countries meeting in Geneva accused the Dutch-based C and A retail store chain of systematically replacing full-time workers with part-time staff and discriminating against women, minority groups and non-Catholics.

Roche prices appeal

Hoffman La Roche the Swiss drug group, is appealing in West Germany's Supreme Court against a West Berlin court ruling requiring it to cut the price of its valium and librium tranquilizers. A judgment is expected in a few weeks.

VW factory plan

Volkswagen, the West German motor manufacturer, is considering opening an assembly works in Austria to produce a four-wheel drive version of its Mini-bus. Talks have been taking place with Austrian officials over facilities for producing 8,000 vehicles a year, but no agreement has yet been reached.

Japan steel output

Japan's crude steel production between January and March is expected to total about 27.5 million tonnes—down about 500,000 from an estimated 28.5 million tonnes in the October-December period.

Mines to close

The Bethlehem Steel Corporation is to close down five small coal mines in its Kayford-Boone-Nicholas division indefinitely. Some 500 workers will be affected by the closure.

Prices curb

Brazilian businessmen have been told they will be subject to severe financial penalties if they raise consumer prices unfairly during the government's attempt to curb the country's economic problems. The government is establishing a network of watchdogs, charged with monitoring the cost of key consumer items.

Japan growth

Japan's private research institute on the national economy said it predicts real economic growth in fiscal 1980 starting next April will fall to 2.5 per cent, compared with an estimated 6.2 per cent this year.

It also forecast the current account payments deficit will narrow to \$2,400m.

Unemployment up

The average monthly number of unemployed in West Germany will be close to 1 million in 1980 and the use of shortened working hours will expand, says Josef Singel, president of the Federal Labor Office said in an interview with the West Germany Economic News Agency.

Investment control

A motion to give control of foreign investments in Canada to the country's inter-parliamentary National Consultative Council, has been passed unanimously by the council.

Decline denied

The Saudi Arabian Ministry of Finance and National Economy described reports of a serious decline in the official foreign exchange reserves of the kingdom as totally misleading.

There had been reports that Saudi Arabian foreign exchange reserves had declined by about \$13,000m from the end of 1977.

Wages law

The Storting, Norway's parliament, has approved a new wage regulation law proposed by the Labour Party minority cabinet. The new law takes effect January 1 and will raise the country's 16-month wage and price freeze.

Banking analysts foresee rise in gross domestic product of 15-20pc

Rhodesia looks to growth in 1980

Rhodesia, hit by seven years of debilitating bush war, is expecting 1980 to be its first year of real economic growth since 1974. The effect of sanctions being lifted by Britain and the United States, however, is likely to be slight and gradual.

Banking analysts in Salisbury foresee a rise in the gross domestic product of 15 to 20 per cent, due in part to a promising start to the growing season. This is offset by an expected increase in the rate of inflation from around 12 per cent at present to 14 per cent or more.

Rhodesia ceased publishing annual import and export figures in 1972, when imports were running at 291m Rhodesian dollars (£194m) and exports at 340m dollars.

A survey by the Standard Bank Group published in Salisbury estimated that last year exports had reached 600m dollars while imports stood at about 420m dollars. Given greater access to international markets by the lifting of the trade embargo, earnings from Rhodesia's exports—mainly agricultural products and minerals—should improve some 15 to 20 per cent. But import costs, especially in the wake of oil price increases, are expected to increase by at least 5 per cent.

Nevertheless, business and banking analysts foresee an overall improvement in foreign exchange earnings, possibly up to as much as 150m dollars over the next

year. "Such an improvement in foreign exchange earnings would almost certainly be used to finance increased imports, especially of intermediate materials for manufacturing and capital equipment", the Standard Bank survey says.

It also gave a warning that the tight import and foreign exchange controls imposed because of sanctions "are likely to be a feature of the economic scene for the next five years at the very least and conceivably for a good deal longer".

A finance ministry spokesman in Salisbury said the lifting of the controls would be dictated by the balance of payments situation. As it improves, that will be eased, he added. Starting today the government will ease restrictions on the amount of money residents can send to Britain. It was given no set figures, saying each transaction is subject to approval by the Reserve Bank.

A finance ministry spokesman said it was not possible to contemplate freeing the millions of dollars in blocked funds which have accumulated in Salisbury since the unilateral declaration of independence in 1965.

The Bank of England last week freed Rhodesian funds in Britain. All pensions, dividends, salaries, investments and gifts can now be sent to Rhodesia freely, a spokesman said. The total involved was not disclosed.

Blocked funds, mainly dividend pay-

ments accumulated by non-residents, are conservatively estimated to total at least \$250m—a figure thought to be much higher than the amount in Britain. In addition, the government owes another \$150m on international loans it raised before 1965 for such projects as the Kariba dam.

Clearly, immediate repayment of such funds—equivalent to almost one year's imports at 1978 levels—could not be contemplated, the Standard Bank said. "A 3 to 4 per cent growth rate next year would mean that for the first time since 1974, the growth rate of the economy will have kept pace with population expansion", the Standard Bank survey continued.

Warning that a cautious forecast on the economic future was necessary, it added: "The prolonged fall in real wages since 1975 due to a combination of internal recession, escalation of the war and the collapse of the Portuguese government in neighbouring Mozambique, which paved the way for the more effective implementation of sanctions."

After shrugging off the initial impact of sanctions, the Rhodesian economy went through a deep decline in the first half of 1975 due to a combination of internal recession, escalation of the war and the collapse of the Portuguese government in neighbouring Mozambique, which paved the way for the more effective implementation of sanctions.

Peter Gregson
Reuters, Salisbury

Engineers defend education council

By Edward Townsend

The Council of Engineering Institutions, whose role as overseer of engineering education would be downgraded by the Finniston report, has defended the present system.

The CEI stresses in its latest survey of engineers, published yesterday, that the United Kingdom has a stable and coherent professional engineering workforce and adds: "The educational qualifications for both chartered and technician engineers are clearly identifiable and represent the foundation on which the profession is firmly established."

The CEI maintains the Engineers' Registration Board, which would disappear if the Finniston recommendations are accepted by the Government. The report's proposals include the formation of a statutory engineering authority and a three-tier registration system.

At a press conference to launch the survey, CEI officials declined to discuss the Finniston report on the grounds that they had not yet received a copy. But Mr Bryan Hildrew, vice-chairman elect of the CEI for 1980-81, said: "Its content and effect may not be seen for a very long time. It may well be a non-event."

The engineering inquiry, chaired by Sir Monty Finniston, was set up by the last Government. Its report, which is being studied by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Industry, will not be published until early next month but its contents have been widely leaked.

Later, in a veiled reference to the Finniston report, Mr Hildrew said that changes to the education system would not come quickly. "It is 10 years before the end product walks out into the world and then he has to gain experience. You cannot have a magical effect overnight."

The survey, of 28,000 British engineers, says: "The nation's technical standing in the world market must be stimulated, restored and recognized in order to maintain and if possible improve the quality and fabric of life in this country. Therefore, it is fundamental that the decline in rewards for the professional engineer's contribution to the economy be reversed."

Engineers' salaries vary from under £5,000 a year to £12,500 a year but the survey shows that only after reaching 45 do



Mr Bryan Hildrew (right) with Dr G. S. Hisslop, chairman of the Council of Engineering Institutions yesterday.

until early next month but its contents have been widely leaked.

Later, in a veiled reference to the Finniston report, Mr Hildrew said that changes to the education system would not come quickly. "It is 10 years before the end product walks out into the world and then he has to gain experience. You cannot have a magical effect overnight."

The survey, of 28,000 British engineers, says: "The nation's technical standing in the world market must be stimulated, restored and recognized in order to maintain and if possible improve the quality and fabric of life in this country. Therefore, it is fundamental that the decline in rewards for the professional engineer's contribution to the economy be reversed."

Engineers' salaries vary from under £5,000 a year to £12,500 a year but the survey shows that only after reaching 45 do

British engineers' earnings match other occupations. Engineers have suffered a 10 per cent fall in the real value of their incomes since the peak in 1972-73.

The survey says that two-thirds of chartered engineers have a degree or equivalent but complex jobs often carry less salary than simple jobs. Mr Hildrew said that the growth of the number of graduates in the profession was inevitable "and by the time the Finniston report is implemented, it will be total."

The survey also shows that commercial responsibility earns engineers over 50 an income differential of almost £2,000 a year; that only 20 per cent of all engineers have a company car; that 45 per cent of chartered engineers and 57 per cent of technician engineers are members of a trade union; that 70 per cent of all engineers work overtime, the larger part of it unpaid.

No subsidy for cheap coking coal, NCB told

The Secretary of State for Energy, Mr David Howell, told the National Coal Board and miners' leaders yesterday that the Government will not subsidize the NCB to provide cheap coking coal to the British Steel Corporation.

The NCB and union leaders had sought Government aid to enable them to give BSC a discount on coking coal to discourage it from turning to cheaper imports for a greater percentage of its supplies. BSC has previously announced that it would raise its coal imports next year from 14 to 24 per cent.

Steel industry leaders have

argued that they can buy imported coal at £10-£14 a tonne cheaper than the NCB price, but the NCB argues that this only a short-term situation.

The miners fear that up to 14,000 jobs could be lost if BSC follows through with its import plans.

Mr Howell said that, while the coal industry was considered to be in a generally good state and would continue to grow, it must stay within its 1980 financial limits of £834m. He said there would not be "a penny more" than the £255m in Government grants already scheduled.

Meccano offer rejected

The two-week-old worker occupation of the Meccano toy plant in Liverpool is to continue. A meeting of about 750 of the 940 workers—mainly women—yesterday voted by a large majority to accept the recommendation of shop stewards and reject the offer of £750 a week and other benefits on Monday by Airfix Industries, the parent company.

Airfix was told yesterday that the reason it gave the Department of Industry for closing the factory on November 30 was not good enough. The department warned the company that unless it gave a better account of why the

workforce was sacked on the spot it would take action.

This would mean withholding 10 per cent of the department's statutory contribution of 41 per cent to redundancy pay and cost the company £30,000.

Mr Mike Egan, district officer of the Municipal and General Workers' Union, estimated that the vote was carried by a two-thirds majority and said that the company's offer to settle outstanding holiday pay immediately had obviously affected some of the women facing financial hardship in the lead-up to Christmas.

Debenhams sells off 'classic women's clothes' outlets Getting rid of an English Lady

Debenhams, the department stores and footwear group, is selling off its chain of English Lady shops—within shops.

English Lady outlets are in 66 Debenhams stores and in 74 others, including some Co-op outlets. Around 1,000 jobs are involved but Debenhams is expected to absorb some and arrangements are likely to be made with the buyers to take on others.

There are no store assets involved in the sale, says Mr Kenneth Bishop, Debenhams' finance director. But he declined to name the buyer—"not a major High Street name"—or the price involved.

The sale is part of the policy of rationalization being followed by Debenhams to concentrate on the strengths of the business in department stores and footwear, says Mr Bishop. He

added: "We are looking at other activities very carefully."

Debenhams has already sold off Greens, its photographic business, and its Caters food supermarkets group. The sale of the Cresta fashion chain is under negotiation.

Harvey Nichols, its up-market Knightsbridge department store, was on the market and attracted offers of over £20m, but Debenhams decided against selling even though buying for it does not readily slot into the group's rationalized buying policies.

The classic women's clothes stocked in English Lady outlets also do not fit readily into the new Debenhams buying system, it is believed.

The system is also behind another reorganization announced yesterday under which Mr Tony Wilson, Debenhams' sales director, will leave to start a new company that will run three South Coast stores, says Mr Bishop.

belonging to Debenhams, under a leasing arrangement.

The three stores are Plummers of Southampton, Plummers of Eastbourne and Hills of Hove. All three are competing with Debenhams stores.

Mr Wilson will develop the three stores on a separate basis through a company of which he will be controlling shareholder and managing director. Debenhams will take a market rental fee contribution under an arrangement that starts on March 31.

The new company will have an option, after five years, to buy the freehold of one or all of the stores at market value.

The objective in the move was to increase the profit contribution from the three stores, according to Mr Bishop.

Derek Harris

East-West chemical trade under scrutiny

By John Hurley

Chemical industry leaders have sounded a warning against imports from East Europe and have pinpointed the risks of compensation and buy-back deals.

Although the growth of East European production capacity is unlikely to be as great as originally feared, CEFIC, the European Council of Chemical Manufacturers' federations, says that there remains "potentially dangerous situation" for specific products and areas of the market.

The survey of East European plant expansion plans and of domestic demand is limited, but recent forecasts suggest that imports from Eastern Europe could double between 1978 and 1985.

CEFIC is sufficiently concerned about the implications for the West to have decided to make twice-yearly reviews of the balance of East-West trade, looking closely at the impact of barter buy-back and compensation deals.

Its findings will be reported to Directorate General III, the internal market and industrial affairs arm of the European Commission. CEFIC members have also been advised to keep national governments aware of the potential threat posed by trade with the East.

DC III undertook a preliminary study of trade with Eastern Europe, and it is understood that a sub-committee of CEFIC recently completed its own review.

Imports from East Europe have caused growing concern among both employers and unions in the EEC chemicals industry, especially when there is surplus capacity for many commodities in the West. This concern has focused on the effect of buy-back and compensation deals, by which, for example, whole or part payment for Western technology and plant is made in kind.

European chemical unions recently sought talks with the commission on the threat to investment and employment in the West. CEFIC believes there is still scope for expanding East-West trade, but is worried that, too often at present, the form it takes distorts competition and threatens to disrupt markets.

It argues that cooperation in the form of buy-back and other such deals is advantageous to Eastern Europe which lacks hard currency and wants Western technology. But it is discouraged by the fact that, too often at present, the form it takes distorts competition and threatens to disrupt markets.

The Commission—and member states—are likely to be made aware of the dangers of such trade in coming months. Industry leaders are likely to stress the need to ensure that East European countries should be encouraged to concentrate exports on products in line with Western European market growth.

They will also stress the importance of ensuring that Western and Eastern European development in Eastern Europe match expected domestic demand.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Monthly figures for Great Britain: Adult vacancies seasonally adjusted			
1979	1978	1977	1976
Dec 1,303	1,261	5.3	235
Jan 1,341	1,293	5.4	234
Feb 1,390	1,306	5.3	229
Mar 1,391	1,301	5.3	222
Apr 1,280	1,258	5.4	244
May 1,281	1,247	5.6	246
Jun 1,281	1,221	5.2	261
Jul 1,352	1,213	5.2	250
Aug 1,352	1,204	5.3	246
Sep 1,325	1,204	5.1	242
Oct 1,325	1,204	5.2	236
Nov 1,282	1,222	5.2	236
Dec 1,282	1,224	5.2	219

REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT

Seasonally adjusted (excluding school leavers)			
Region	Number	Change in month	% of em. p.
South East	256,700	-700	-3.4
South West	128,500	-1,700	-6.2
West Midlands	122,100	-1,400	-5.3
West of England	123,500	-1,600	-4.5
Yorkshire & Humberside	119,500	-1,200	-5.9
North	117,000	-1,000	-8.0
Scotland	70,500	-300	-7.9
London	170,000	+1,000	+0.6
Gr. Britain	1,233,600	+11,000	+0.9
N. Ireland	50,000	+3,000	+10.6
U.K.	1,283,600	+12,000	+0.9

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Petrol supplies in rural areas

From Mr Graham Facks-Martin
Sir, I write regarding the very serious situation that is developing in relation to petrol supplies in rural areas.

The major oil companies, apparently acting in concert, appear very reluctant to renew existing contracts when they expire and appear determined over a period to cease to supply rural garages with petrol at all. The background to the present situation is of a ruthless cut-price war in 1978 followed by a petrol shortage in 1979 when garages were rationed in relation to their throughput in comparison to previous years. This combination of circumstances substantially reduced the turnover of most rural petrol stations.

Among other arguments of extremely dubious economic validity, the oil companies are using the reduced turnover to justify their actions, as an excuse for ceasing to supply petrol. One of the other arguments being used is that it is no longer economic to supply petrol to

garages, yet it is apparently economic to supply heating oil or to supply diesel to farmers like myself, in much smaller quantities than deliveries to garages.

Another is the economic inability of rural garages, which will be impaired by the refusal to supply them with petrol. If the oil companies were genuinely concerned about small rural garages, they would expect their terms of business to reflect this instead, as is well known, they require payment in full prior to delivery. I wonder how many of the major oil companies pay their suppliers in the same way?

The real reason for the very harsh line being adopted is obscure but with at least one major company in this area they have no alternative but to therefore their actions are going to lead to reduced petrol sales on at least this section of the British market. Could it be that other markets are more financially attractive to them?

There has in any event been a considerable reduction in outlets due to the changes in the implementation of the fire regulations subsequent to local government reorganisation, which continues.

What then needs to be done? I believe that the Department of Energy should agree criteria with all the major oil companies for the supply of petrol to rural garages and that these criteria should be published. In my view the Government should make it clear to the oil companies that if criteria cannot be agreed that they will be introduced by legislation. Meanwhile, it is too much to ask the oil companies to risk their present actions until such criteria are agreed.

I write in hope.
Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM FACKS-MARTIN,
North Cornwall District Council,
Treheny Cottage,
South Petherwin,
Cornwall.
December 8.

Chemical research cuts with far-reaching effects

From Mr W. McMillan

Sir, The Department of Industry has decided to effect major cuts in the work of the Division of Chemical Standards at the National Physical Laboratory. These cuts mean the closure of the only division devoted to chemistry at NPL and the serious work of the Division of Chemical Standards at the National Physical Laboratory.

The physical chemical group provided thermodynamic and phase equilibria data for a wide range of chemical and metallurgical industries in design, safety and conservation of energy and resources. As well as acting as a prime source of high quality data the group developed advanced computer methods for industry and carried out many industrial consultancies. It is not planned that these facilities be available elsewhere.

The reference materials were provided for the calibration of

equipment used routinely for quality control and plant operations. A wide range of industries are affected including pharmaceuticals, foodstuffs, metallurgy, ceramics and the chemical and process industries.

There is a continuously increasing insistence on precise specifications of materials involved in international trade. Because of these pressures most industrialised nations are becoming aware of the necessity for nationally focused centres for the collection and dissemination of reference materials. The industrial community depends on the service these centres provide.

Yours sincerely,
W. McMILLAN,
Chairman, NPL Section,
The Institution of Professional Civil Servants,
National Physical Laboratory,
Middleton,
Middlesbrough,
December 14.

The rail-mail connexion should be strengthened

From Mr R. H. Foster and Mr K. A. Blackwell

Sir, During this decade the postal service has deteriorated in inverse proportion to the real cost to the user. This has occurred despite the fact that the postal service has been mechanised and other household factors and, dare we say it, the post code. Hopefully this situation will be rectified in the next decade.

A means of achieving some improvement would be to ensure greater cooperation between the Post Office and British Rail. There is a current trend away from the use of rail to carry mail, notwithstanding that rail is by nature well fitted to do so. This trend were to be reversed by combining so far as practicable the postal functions of both enterprises, the following benefits could accrue:—

(i) While existing post offices in most towns would be retained, letter sorting and carrying facilities for service vehicles (both of which require considerable space) could be transferred to the railway station, where in most cases there is a large amount of available space. This would release valuable central sites for redevelopment.

(ii) Further, in smaller towns and villages, particularly in those which have centrally situated railway stations, all post office functions could be concentrated at the station.

(iii) By sorting letters at stations, there would be greater flexibility and quicker turnover in the sorting and despatch of mail, as the means of transport would be much more readily accessible.

The Commission—and member states—are likely to be made aware of the dangers of such trade in coming months. Industry leaders are likely to stress the need to ensure that East European countries should be encouraged to concentrate exports on products in line with Western European market growth.

They will also stress the importance of ensuring that Western and Eastern European development in Eastern Europe match expected domestic demand.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT H. FOSTER,
K. A. BLACKWELL,
51 High Street,
Stanton, Yorks.
December 6.

Level of investment in housing

From Mr Peter Treu

Sir, I agree with Mr Norman Griggs (December 12) that there is no real connexion between under investment in industry and the high level of over-occupation in Britain. Nevertheless, Mr D. S. Robertson (December 5) is right in suggesting that there is a tax bias in favour of private housing as opposed to social investment. However, his proposed remedies are too draconian, and would almost certainly be counter-productive. He overlooks the extent to which house building stimulates a wide range of industrial activity. The imbalance could be redressed more gently and without detriment to housing by the following measures:

1. There is no need to abolish mortgage interest relief. The Chancellor has already devalued it by reducing income tax and inflation will continue to do so.

2. A capital gains tax on the sale of private houses would be wrong in principle, but the same effect could be achieved with greater benefit to the future cash flow of building societies if they forthwith introduced equity mortgages, entitling them to a modest share of the capital appreciation of the houses sold on mortgage repaid. This would have the benefit of "recycling" some of the investment in private housing.

3. There is no need to introduce specific relief for the purchase of industrial shares. All that is necessary is to abo-

lish the investment income surcharge, which incidentally would also make investment in private rented accommodation more attractive.

Yours faithfully,
PETER TREU,
Great Oaks,
Shippbourne,
Kent.
December 14.

From Mr Bernard Kilroy

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

The CSI's report

Incidentally, the Council for the Securities Industry published its views on Department of Energy investigations on the 17th day that the present Government ordered its first inquiry—into St. Piran.

The events which have been a "sundering issue" since Mr Robert Maxwell kicked against the system eight years ago and suggested that the department's report into Pergamon Press was fair.

All along the central criticism has been at such inquiries as Star Chamber; that inspectors appointed by the department have too often adopted an inquisitorial attitude towards those who appear before the inquiry, and that investigations take far too long, which more often than not means that by the time the report is published the whole inquiry has lost its point. The CSI recognizes both these points and makes some forcible recommendations for bringing the inquisitorial and literary powers inspectors. Witnesses should be provided with a guide on the procedure to be followed by inspectors; they should be told in advance in some detail about the matters in documents on which they will be examined and the nature of any criticism which will appear in a report with the aim to offer comment.

Most importantly, the CSI says that inspectors should confine themselves to the facts (that presumably means no more than the "horse" remarks such as appeared in the Ralph Hilton report) and avoid character studies of witnesses, animadversions on their conduct.

On the question of speeding up the procedure, the CSI is less helpful, though finds the time normally taken in conducting such inquiries, publishing a report and in carrying out any necessary prosecution, quite unacceptable.

Anecdotal support is the case of the City of Glasgow Bank which closed its doors on October 1, 1878, with losses concealed by entries of £71m. An immediate investigation followed and a report produced on October 18.

The outcome was that by February the following year the directors and the manager of the bank were in prison. "We fly need to get back to a similar sense of urgency in the handling of current cases," says the CSI.

Life has become a good deal more complicated, since 1878—but CSI has a point of view on which the Department of Trade, which earlier this month said it was reviewing the procedure for conducting its company inquiries, will no doubt consider. It is no-one wants to see any corners cut in its area.

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Trading profits, however, managed a 23 per cent increase thanks to substantially higher depreciation charges following a property revaluation. Pork Farms, making its first full year contribution, undoubtedly proved the out-turn with a 140 per cent increase to £4m against last year's £1.6m. The group's short-term investment earnings.

At the same time, however, Genstar is only a trade investment and last year's dividend income of \$3.1m looks nowhere near as exciting as the profits and loss account as the consolidation of associate company profits—the preferred route for its overseas expansion—which now make up almost half the group's total.

Increasingly the group's strategy is to concentrate on cement production in developing countries, and move as far away from its home base as the French Lafarge concern has done already.

Recently Blue Circle announced it was spending £23m on the purchase of Chile's largest cement concern and it is thought to be eyeing the growing economies of the Far East as platforms to keep it the world's biggest cement producer.

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ings, ratings that underline how far Northern Foods' growth halo has slipped for the time being.

MEPC Development potential

Having come through the property traumas of the mid-1970s, MEPC results for the year to the end of September have only been blotted by problem development in Hawaii where construction defects have forced it to make a film provision.

Even with this setback pre-tax profits rose from £10.3m to £14.1m, thanks mainly to rent reversions, while the 25 per cent dividend increase to 7.14p a share gross has marginally exceeded the forecast at the time of the £36m rights issue, and the 4.1 per cent yield is now slightly above par for good quality property shares.

The office block developments in Brussels and Sydney, which have been difficult to let, are no longer the drain they were and the Munich site, which used to cost around £3m a year to hold, has been sold, severing the last links with the turbulence of the past.

However, MEPC's chief attraction is the high proportion of development property on its books.

Provided MEPC can pre-let its Guildford and West One central London developments—and later its Long Acre site in Covent Garden—this should ensure a comfortable future rise in profits.

On the back of an asset revaluation, which shows a £133m surplus over the net book value, borrowings now amount to only two thirds of shareholder's funds. Fully diluted net asset value of 264p a share represents a 34 per cent discount on the 175p share price, roughly the same as for the property bellweather Land Securities. But MEPC's figures show that profits grow rather than asset values could start to be the more important yardstick for property shares.

Meanwhile, with its development programme fully funded, cash and short-term deposits of £51m and a proposal to increase its share capital before shareholders, MEPC looks ready to pick up a small property company or specialist retailer. With lean times ahead for those that are highly geared MEPC could acquire some bargain properties.



The sale by Blue Circle, whose chairman is Sir Kenneth Owen (above), of its 10.2 per cent holding in the Canadian Genstar building materials group to Société Générale de Belgique for £27m has all the appearance of a quasi-rights issue for a company that is spending heavily—almost £60m—at home and overseas against a background of probably no more than static profits in the current year.

No doubt the timing has been dominated more by the buoyancy of the Canadian stock market where Genstar's shares are trading only 25p over the \$25 price Blue Circle has obtained and a high this year of \$27, giving it a useful book profit of £22.2m in the seven years it has had the investment.

At the same time, however, Genstar is only a trade investment and last year's dividend income of \$3.1m looks nowhere near as exciting as the profits and loss account as the consolidation of associate company profits—the preferred route for its overseas expansion—which now make up almost half the group's total.

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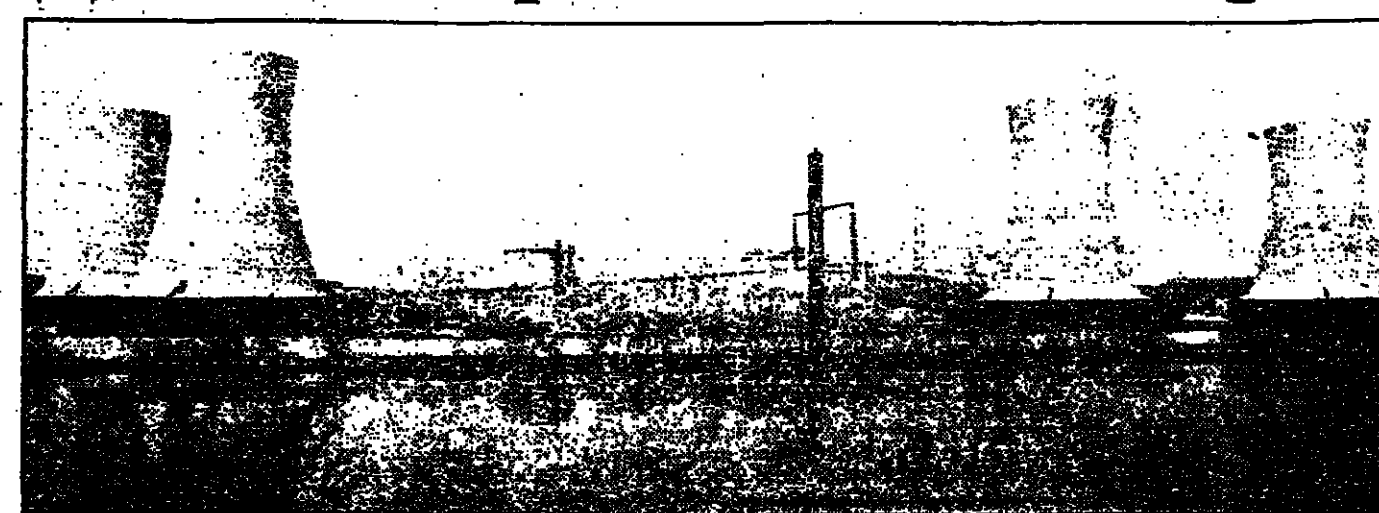
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The reactor debate entered a new phase yesterday. Kenneth Owen reports

Another cautious step into the nuclear age



Three Mile Island: the accident there has overshadowed the pressurized water reactor debate.

In his nuclear programme announcement yesterday, Mr David Howell, Secretary of State for Energy, gave a few pointers to the choice of Britain's next nuclear reactor and the shape of the nuclear industry, but left many questions unanswered.

For the industry, he confirmed that the structure of the National Nuclear Corporation is to be streamlined; GEC's contract-management role is to be dropped; and the present shareholdings in the corporation are to remain as they are. He is not yet ready to say who will succeed Lord Aldington as NNC chairman.

Yesterday's announcement follows extensive talks between Mr Howell and senior officials and industry leaders on the future structure of the NNC. The Government's aim is to forge a stronger nuclear corporation, simplifying the present structure and conceivably adding a manufacturing role later.

In this it has not been helped by the traditional rivalry within the industry, based partly on commitments to competing technical solutions and partly on personal antagonisms. Mr Howell has dropped the GEC management role in an attempt to gain the best from all parts of the industry, and he intends to strengthen the NNC board.

He hopes that all sides will hush bad recollections of the civil war they have been waging over many years and will be ready to pull together. This hope may be premature to the continuing lobbying.

Certainly the NNC chairmanship is a sensitive issue. The name of Sir John King of Babcock International has been mentioned for this post, but

the Department of Energy maintains that no decision has been made. Mr Howell is presumably looking for someone with a knowledge of the nuclear industry—but probably not from one of the main contracting suppliers.

In the reshaped NNC a first task will be to establish a strong, credible management; Mr Howell does not propose to change the shareholding pattern. GEC holds 30 per cent, the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority 35 per cent, and British Nuclear Associates (BNA) 35 per cent. The members of BNA are Babcock International (12 per cent); Clarke Chapman (part of Northern Engineering Industries, 10 per cent); Taylor Woodrow (45 per cent); Sir Robert McAlpine (2.5 per cent); Head Wrightson (3 per cent); Whessoe (2 per cent); and DRG(UK) (0.5 per cent). The task ahead of the re-

shaped industry, as announced by the Government yesterday, is a 10-year, 15,000-megawatt programme of nuclear power station construction. Only the type or mixture of types of reactor is missing. The two possibilities are the British designed advanced gas-cooled reactor (AGR) and the American-designed pressurized water reactor (PWR).

Preliminary design and safety work on a PWR (together with construction of two further AGRs) was authorized by Mr Anthony Wedgwood Benn, then Secretary of State for Energy in 1978. Yesterday Mr Howell took this one stage further—the NNC and the Central Electricity Generating Board are to activate "the previously dormant licence agreement with Westinghouse and prepare a final PWR design for safety approval."

Overshadowing all PWR prospects since March 28 has been

the accident, on that date, at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant, Pennsylvania. Yesterday the view of the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate of the Health and Safety Executive was made public; that the United States accident "did not arise from any serious inherent weakness in the concept or design of the pressurized water reactor".

The CEBB concur: the accident, they say, "had not revealed any fundamental weakness in the PWR concept or its basic engineering"; it had resulted from "weaknesses in detail design, safety analysis, performance of some components and above all operator behaviour".

Subject to safety clearance and public inquiry, the Government hopes that construction of Britain's first PWR will begin in 1982 and that it might take about seven years to complete. The parliamentary select

committee on energy, also, will almost certainly wish to examine prospects for the PWR.

But the basic uncertainty remains—will the 10-year programme be based on the AGR, on the PWR or on a combination of the two? This is the crucial question. The Government is deliberately moving slowly, one step at a time, in approaching a nuclear programme that will, if it continues, outlast several governments.

For the time being the industry will have to wait some time longer before it can get into its stride again. So far its record includes a successful first-generation (Magnox) programme; lateness, expense and technical problems in the second-generation (AGR) programme; abortive work on the steam-generating heavy water reactor and continued interest but little action on the PWR.

A transatlantic tremor through Lloyd's

PRINCIPAL UK QUOTED INSURANCE BROKING GROUPS

Links with American firms

handles business from several firms including Alexander & Alexander and Rollins Burdick Hunter.

Hogg Robinson: Has third stake in Market Services Inc; receives American business from R. B. Jones and Corroon and Black.

Sedgwick Forbes Bland: Discussing pooling arrangement with Alexander & Alexander; Bland Payne previously 20 per cent owned by Marsh, maintains some links with Marsh, Frank B. Hall and Rollins Burdick Hunter.

Stenhouse: Has joint North American company with Canadian group Reed Shaw Osler. Continental Corporation recently took 20 per cent stake in Stenhouse.

Stewart Wrightson: Strong presence of its own in United States; handles business from Marsh, Alexander & Alexander.

Willis Faber: Involved in joint ventures with Johnson and Higgins, including company to operate in NY insurance exchange; also receives reinsurance business from Marsh subsidiary Guy Carpenter.

Leslie and Godwin: Taken over by Frank B. Hall; 75 per cent of Lloyd's broking interests sold on to Rothschild Investment Trust to satisfy Lloyd's rules on foreign control.

* No longer quoted.

at other ways to breach the walls of the Lloyd's fortress and the idea of premium pooling was born.

Until then the American groups tended to use several different British firms to ferry business to Lloyd's and the London market, on a non-exclusive basis, although building up particularly close relationships with one or two firms.

Marsh, easily the biggest purveyor of United States business to Lloyd's—possibly accounting indirectly for as much as a quarter of the market's premiums—while building up a close link with Bowring, channelled much of its business through other groups like Sedgwick, Alexander, Howden and Stewart Wrightson.

Marsh said that, if successful in a Bowring bid, it will accede to Lloyd's wishes on foreign control. On the longer view, however, Marsh must be more far-reaching.

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Marsh & McLennan's chairman, Mr John Regan, said at the time of the pooling announcement that these other links would not be affected.

Rightly or wrongly, Bowring's rivals for Marsh business were not sure and the spat of transatlantic marriages was under way.

The most dramatic consequence was the merger of Sedgwick Forbes and Bland Payne to form the United Kingdom's biggest group, with a market capitalization of more than £300m, and their plans to share business with Alexander & Alexander. This merger, apparently angered Marsh, which has subsequently taken much of its business away from Sedgwick and placed it through Bowring.

The Marsh Bowring breakdown and subsequent talk of a takeover bid have hardly cleared the air and, as long as Lloyd's sticks to its rule on overseas control, uncertainty will continue to beset the industry.

In the longer term Lloyd's itself is under some threat unless it can come up with a compromise to satisfy the Americans' aspirations. Plans for a rival "Lloyd's" in America have still not proved fully workable, but if the Americans can make a success of their own insurance exchange the pressure will be on Lloyd's to open its doors wider—or see business switched away.

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northern Foods year of consolidation

northern Foods spent the year digesting its acquisitions, preparing its way into the American ham producing business with its 2m bid for Bluebird—the subject of today's EGM—and met market expectations by improving pre-tax profits by 14 per cent in a difficult trading period.

Turnover for the year to September 30, 1979 rose 20 per cent to £333m in spite of generally lower demand in the food industry. Pre-tax profits were ahead by only 14 per cent to £25.5m, reflecting the firm's downturn on the group's short-term investment earnings.

Trading profits, however, managed a 23 per cent increase thanks to substantially higher depreciation charges following a property revaluation. Pork Farms, making its first full year contribution, undoubtedly proved the out-turn with a 140 per cent increase to £4m against last year's £1.6m. The group's short-term investment earnings.

At the same time, however, Genstar is only a trade investment and last year's dividend income of \$3.1m looks nowhere near as exciting as the profits and loss account as the consolidation of associate company profits—the preferred route for its overseas expansion—which now make up almost half the group's total.

Increasingly the group's strategy is to concentrate on cement production in developing countries, and move as far away from its home base as the French Lafarge concern has done already.

Recently Blue Circle announced it was spending £23m on the purchase of Chile's largest cement concern and it is thought to be eyeing the growing economies of the Far East as platforms to keep it the world's biggest cement producer.

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The sale by Blue Circle, whose chairman is Sir Kenneth Owen (above), of its 10.2 per cent holding in the Canadian Genstar building materials group to Société Générale de Belgique for £27m has all the appearance of a quasi-rights issue for a company that is spending heavily—almost £60m—at home and overseas against a background of probably no more than static profits in the current year.

No doubt the timing has been dominated more by the buoyancy of the Canadian stock market where Genstar's shares are trading only 25p over the \$25 price Blue Circle has obtained and a high this year of \$27, giving it a useful book profit of £22.2m in the seven years it has had the investment.

At the same time, however, Genstar is only a trade investment and last year's dividend income of \$3.1m looks nowhere near as exciting as the profits and loss account as the consolidation of associate company profits—the preferred route for its overseas expansion—which now make up almost half the group's total.

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The news that Marsh & McLennan, the leading American insurance broking group, is considering an outright takeover bid for its long-standing United Kingdom ally, C. T. Bowring, has sent further shockwaves through an industry already in a turmoil.

Authorized Units, Insurance & Offshore Funds

Wall Street

Gold soars again

Commodities

Commodities

Discount market

Discount market

On the plus side for the market

Options

Bank Base Rates

7 day deposit on sums of
£10,000 and under 15%, up
to £25,000 15%, over
£25,000 15 1/2%.

478 79 h Low	Company	Price Ch'ge	Gross Div(p)	Yld Ct	P/E
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[illegible]

Foreign exchange—Sterling, spot,	578.65	844.66;	transportation 232.40
2.1995	2.2002;	three months,	(258.58);
			utilities 109.51
2.1900	(2.1907);	Canadian dollar,	65
			stocks 259.75
1.1745	(1.1744).		(301.65).
The Dow Jones spot commodity index			New York Stock Exchange index, 62.04
was 422.91. The futures index was			(62.61);
429.70.			industrials 70.35
			(71.05).
			transportation, 60.79
			71.01; utilities
			57.20
			(57.33);
			financial, 62.95
			(63.41).

LEAD was very steady.—Afternoon.—
Cash \$258.50 per metric ton; three
months \$258.50; 1919, \$260 tons.
Morning.—Cash \$258.19; three months
\$258.50; 506-ton. Settlement \$259.
Sales, 3,100 tons.

ZINC was very steady.—Afternoon.—
Oct. 120.50-21.00; Dec. 122-22.50.
Sales, 49 lots.

Wool.—Greasy futures (ponce
Kilo: Australian (1919), Dec. 28-
29; 1920, Jan. 29-30, Feb. 29-30.
38; March, May, July, Oct. Dec.
March and May all 130-40. Sales,
211. New Zealand crossbreds (quiet).

Cash \$368.59	metric ton; three	Dec. 190-205; March, May, July, Oct.
months \$366-66.50.	Sales, 2,400	Dec. March and May, all 168-95.
tonnes, Morning.—Cash \$357.50-58.50;	Sales, nil.	
three months. \$365-66.	Settlement,	GRAIN (The Baltic).—WHEAT.—
\$358.80. Sales, 1,275 tonnes.		Canadian Western red spring unmoored

[illegible]

NICKEL was furrier.—Afternoon.—
Cash. \$3,860-70 net metric ton: three
months \$2,935-40: Sales. 518 tons.
Morning.—Cash. \$3,840-60: three
months \$2,895-2,005. Settlement.

[illegible]

1.540-50: July. 1.530-34: Sept.
1.540-49: Dec. 1.550-69: March.
1.575-1.590. Sales: 6.656 lots. ICCO
prices: daily (Dec 17) 147.02c: Indi-

[illegible]

Feb. 196-202; April, 197-205. Sales, 115 lots. Pittsington Bros 200. . . 3 prem
SOYABEAN MEAL was quiet 1E per tonne; Dec. 120-25; Feb. 125.50-23.80; April, 120.30-23.50. Jan. Issue price in parentheses. * Ex dividend
* Issued by tender 2 5/8 paid, a 5/8 paid, b 1/2

Foreign exchange report

Continental currencies finished slightly dearer to both London and New York yesterday. But dealers

Gold trading was extremely quiet, overshadowed by the Opec pricing meeting, the US-Iran situation, and the approach of Christmas and New Year.

Small commercial selling in the very thin market drove the pound down to about 2.1930 against the dollar in the early stages. The yen was steady at 238.45.

Exchange rate moves fell 0.1% to 69.9.

The dollar lost ground against Continental currencies, but closed off the bottom. German marks rose from 1.885 to 1.77, Swiss francs gained from 1.6085 to 1.6050, and French francs appreciated from 4.0685 to 4.0625. The Japanese yen reacted from 239.25 to 238.45.

Sterling Spot and Forward

Market rates		Market rates		Market rates	
1 day's average		1 month		1 month	
December 18		November 18		1 month	
New York	22.1308-0900	22.1260-1280	New York	26.28-29 prem	25.65-66 prem
London	12.9775-9780	12.9600-9615	London	78-79 prem	75.65-66 prem
Amsterdam	1.33-200	4.32-220	Amsterdam	100-101 prem	98-99 prem
Brussels	51.80-82.65	51.82-82.00	Brussels	11-12 prem	10-20 prem
Frankfurt	117.24-25	117.24-25	Frankfurt	10-11 prem	9-10 prem
Paris	1.29-130	3.00-31.00	Paris	27-27 1/2 prem	26-27 prem
Lisbon	128.20-110.00	178.35-25	Lisbon	30-32 disc	30-35 disc
Madrid	144.30-35	144.60-65	Madrid	11-12 disc	11-12 disc
Milan	222-20	222-20	Milan	4-4 1/2 disc	5-5 1/2 disc

Oslo	18.30-21.00sk	10.30-14.00sk	Oslo	4-3 ore prem	14-20 ore prem
Paris	8.00-10.00sk	8.30-10.00sk	Paris	2-4 ore prem	3-5 ore prem
Stockholm	9.15-11.15sk	9.30-11.15sk	Stockholm	1 ore prem-1 ore	
Tokyo	12.30-13.00sk	12.30-13.00sk		disc	3-14 ore prem
Vienna	27.35-30.00sk	27.43-30.00sk	Vienna	12-2 ore prem	30-40 ore prem

Dollar Spot

Sterling: Other Markets

Markets	
Australia	1.9660-1.9815
Bahrein	0.9120-0.9400
Finland	8.1725-8.1773
Greece	92.55-93.45
Hongkong	3.077-3.080
Indonesia	160.00-160.50
Canada	1.1743-1.1745
Netherlands	91.930-91.970
Belgium	38.13-38.16
Denmark	5.3725-5.3780
West Germany	1.7380-1.7385
Portugal	48.75-49.25

Ireland	1.8300-1.0330	Spain	810.30-810.00
Kuwait	0.5575-0.5175	Italy	4.9800-4.9870
Malaysia	4.7830-4.8130	Norway	4.9800-4.9870
Mexico	49.35-50.55	France	4.9825-4.9700
		Sweden	4.1815-4.1835

New Zealand	2.2896-2.3486	Japan	209.26-236.76
Saudi Arabia	7.2506-7.4206	Austria	12.40-12.50
Singapore	4.7696-4.7996	Switzerland	1.0000-1.0070
South Africa	1.8376-1.8380		

* Swiss quoted in U.S. currency.
 † Canada \$1. U.S. \$0.851-0.8577

EMS European Currency Rates

	ECT central rates	currency unit ECU	% change from cen- tral rate	% change adjusted ^a	divergence limit, plus-minus
Belgian franc	36.7897	40.3312	+1.33	+1.33	1.50
Danish krone	7.46036	7.46075	+0.01	+0.00	1.50

German D-mara	2.48505	2.47250	-0.19	-0.19	1.128
French franc	5.84700	5.82174	-0.56	-0.56	1.3837
Dutch guilder	2.74362	2.74040	-0.12	-0.12	1.5312
Irish punt	0.68822	0.67590	-0.51	-0.51	1.668
Italian lire	1157.79	1161.31	+0.99	+0.91	4.46

changes are for the ECU therefore positive change denotes weak currency, adjusted for market's weight in the ECU, and for the firm's wider divergence limits, adjustment calculated by The Times.

Authorized Units, Insurance & Offshore Funds

[illegible]



TAYLOR WOODROW

Stock Exchange Prices

Equities drift lower

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings Began, Dec 10. Dealings End, Dec 27. \$ Contango Day, Dec 28. Settlement Day, Jan 1.

§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

BELL'S
SCOTCH WHISKY
BELL'S

[illegible]

PERSONAL CHOICE



Section of the Early Music Group from New College, Oxford: Fanfare for Young Musicians (ITV, 4.45)

Today's young musicians are not necessarily (if fact rarely) tomorrow's virtuosos and it does not matter all that much if they aren't. What does matter is that they enjoy music making and are seen to enjoy it and might even win a £3,000 prize into the bargain. That would appear to be the underlying philosophy of the Young Musicians (ITV, 4.45), the laudible Thames vision contest which reaches its final tonight with the selection of the winning combination. There are four finalists out of the 200 groups of hopefuls who sent in tapes, and we already seen how confidently the 30 who were eventually selected faced the cameras in earlier heats.

is with mixed feelings that I bid farewell to Donald's weekly series Discovering English Churches (C 2, 8.30). They have been painstakingly researched and carefully photographed and the attempt to fill out details with living people has largely been successful. But I fear Mr Sinden is not an ideal guide. His style has been unrelentingly theatrical. Discovering English Churches—that would be right up his street.

there has to be the fragmentation of Count Dracula (C 1, 11.17). When shown for the first time, in December it was in one piece. For the repeat, it was split down the middle and the two halves were shown separately. Tonight's attempt is the first of three to be shown on successive nights. I may think this is a case of spreading the blood a bit thin, but there is plenty for everybody. In fact, Philip Saville's is most wholehearted and goriest attempt to film the Stoker that I can remember.

has not been a good run of Masterminds for the female. Only one woman has got through to the semi-finals, but Beatrice Symms from Dublin, can still make it to the finals if she knows a thing or two (or 15) about Jane Austen. Tonight's of nerves and knowledge features the four highest-scoring entries up from the 13 previous heats. Miss Symms's fellow contestants will be asked questions about the mountains of land, George Borrow and British prime ministers (BBC 1, 1.00 News, 1.20 Thames News).

tonight's radio feature Voices from a Promised Land (Radio 1, 1.00) draws its inspiration from the fact that Israelis buy more sheep per head than any other country in Europe. The programme, presented by Ian Trevelin, literary editor of Times, and compiled by Anat Feinberg, examines the richly textured strands representing the many cultures and races which make up Israel's literary tapestry.

AT THE SYMBOLS MEAN: + STEREO; * BLACK AND WHITE; REPEAT.

Broadcasting Guide

Edited by Peter Davalle

TELEVISION

BBC 1

12.45 pm News and weather.
1.00 Pebble Mill at One: Programme presenter Martin Foster goes to the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh to see the young boy and girl sponsored by Pebble Mill at One for the Year of the Child.
1.45 Over the Moon: Wheels and Wires (r). Close down at 2.00.
3.25 Pöbel y Cwm: for Welsh viewers.
3.55 Play School: the story is Christmas Spiders, told by Chloe Ashcroft and Johnny Ball.
4.20 Pöbel and Dixie: cartoon. High Jinks (r).
4.25 Jackanory: Spike Milligan reads part 2 of John Andrew's 'Help! I am a Prisoner in a Toothpaste Factory'.
4.40 Tom and Jerry: cartoon. The Night Before Christmas (r).
4.50 John Craven's Newsround: junior newsreel.

BBC 2

10.20 Chariot: for Asian women viewers. Closedown at 10.45.
11.00 Play School: the same as BBC 1, 3.55. Closedown at 11.25.
5.40 Laurel and Hardy: Them That Hills. Stanley and Oliver, caravanning, find a well filled with hoodlums' 'Rogue'.
6.00 Adventure at Sea: final part of Tigris—the Superlunary Voyage of Thor Heyerdahl. The final, final decision after travelling 3,000 miles.
6.50 Cricket: Highlights from the fifth day's play of the first Test between Australia and England. From Perth.

THAMES

9.30 am Under the Same Sun: a Russian story about a woodcutter who falls in love with a czar's daughter.
9.50 Rocket Robin Hood: cartoon.
10.10 Canada—Five Portraits: the fading fortunes of Canada's maritime provinces.
11.00 Fantasy Island: American series about a place where dreams come true.
11.55 The Bubbles: cartoon. Weather Patrol.
12.00 Cloppa Castle: medieval puppet show.
12.10 pm Stepping Stones: the theme today is tails.
12.30 Farmhouse Kitchen: Roast duck is on the menu for this Christmas meal for a small family.
1.00 News. 1.20 Thames News.

1.30 Armchair Theatre: The Limbo Connection. An elderly alcoholic holds the key to the mystery of a missing wife.
2.00 After Noon Plus: Tommy Steele answers viewers' questions; there is a card from St. Bride's, Fleet Street, the journalists' church; and items on courageous children and the Christmas drink-drive problem.

5.00 Rentsanta: Three ghosts are hired to play Father Christmas in a department store where a pantomime is being produced.

5.40 News: with Kenneth Kendall.
5.55 Nationwide.
6.45 Angels: the question mark still hangs over the future of the hospital's casualty department.
7.10 Star Trek: Captain Kirk versus the Thing from outer space.
8.00 Mastermind: Semi-final, featuring the best of the runners including the only woman still left in the contest (see Personal Choice).
8.30 Family Ties: Basil hasn't really forgotten his and Sybil's wedding anniversary. He just pretends that he has (r).
9.00 News: with Peter Woods.
9.25 Robinson's Travels: Final segment of Robert Robinson's jocular odyssey across India. He calls on some Brits still living in Simla and visits the Lucknow public school which features in Kipling's Kim.

7.30 Scissors: cartoon from Czechoslovakia.

7.30 News: with sub-titles for the hard of hearing.
7.40 A Kind of Childhood: how a little Japanese blind girl took part in an education experiment that is now famous in Japan—the successful integration of sightless children in a school intended for the blind.
8.30 Discovering English Churches: Final programme in the series. Donald Sinden visits two churches built by Gothic revivals: St George Gilbert Scott—St Mark at Worsley, Greater Manchester, and All Souls', Haly Hill, Halifax.
9.00 M*A*S*H: Korea war comedy.

4.45 Fanfare for Young Musicians: results of this long running competition (see Personal Choice).

5.15 The Practice: medical world drama.
5.45 News. 6.00 Thames News.
6.25 Help! The Joan Shenton information feature.
6.35 Crossroads: more about those motel folk.

7.00 This is Your Life: another of Eamonn Andrews' biographies.
8.00 The Big Top Variety Show: entertainment in a circus tent. Bernice Winters and Moira Anderson head the bill.
9.00 The Racing Game: Horseman. Another Dick Francis race-track thriller. This one is about the kidnapping of a valuable horse.
10.00 News.
10.30 TV Eye: Tonight's edition does what so many current affairs programmes are doing this week, and next: looking back over the past decade.
11.30 Facts for Life: Family Matters. Looking after handicapped children.
12.00 The Andy Williams Show: the American singer, with Jose Feliciano as his guest.
12.25 am Close: Another Andrew Cruickshank reading from Through the Year with J. B. Phillips.



Bernice Winters: The Big Top Variety Show (ITV, 8.00)

10.15 Parkinson: His guests tonight include former ITN newscaster Reinald Bosquet and the singing group Manhattan Transfer.

11.17 Count Dracula: Part one of Gerald Savory's version of Bram Stoker's classic horror story, with Louis Jordan as the count and Frank Finlay as Van Helsing. Part two tomorrow night (see Personal Choice).
12.10 am Weather.

Regions

BBC 1 VARIATIONS: Wales: 3.25 am Transmitters close down. 5.00 News. 5.45 Wales Today. 6.45 Headline News. 7.00 News. 7.25 News. 7.55 News. 8.00 News. 8.30 News. 8.55 News. 9.00 News. 9.25 News. 9.55 News. 10.00 News. 10.30 News. 10.55 News. 11.00 News. 11.30 News. 11.55 News. 12.00 News. 12.30 News. 12.55 News. 1.00 News. 1.30 News. 1.55 News. 2.00 News. 2.30 News. 2.55 News. 3.00 News. 3.30 News. 3.55 News. 4.00 News. 4.30 News. 4.55 News. 5.00 News. 5.30 News. 5.55 News. 6.00 News. 6.30 News. 6.55 News. 7.00 News. 7.30 News. 7.55 News. 8.00 News. 8.30 News. 8.55 News. 9.00 News. 9.25 News. 9.55 News. 10.00 News. 10.30 News. 10.55 News. 11.00 News. 11.30 News. 11.55 News. 12.00 News. 12.30 News. 12.55 News. 1.00 News. 1.30 News. 1.55 News. 2.00 News. 2.30 News. 2.55 News. 3.00 News. 3.30 News. 3.55 News. 4.00 News. 4.30 News. 4.55 News. 5.00 News. 5.30 News. 5.55 News. 6.00 News. 6.30 News. 6.55 News. 7.00 News. 7.30 News. 7.55 News. 8.00 News. 8.30 News. 8.55 News. 9.00 News. 9.25 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HOLIDAYS AND VILLAS

Christmas Ski Bumper New Year

FROM ONLY \$19.95

CHRISTMAS: 22/23 December
a happy dining Christmas by 10-
the vineyards, mostly to 10-
merand, and for 7 weeks in hand.

NEW YEAR: 5 January bumper
BEST BARGAINS
Cherrier, Saint-Mongeover
Sole, Solvay, L'Espresso, Mar-
chandise, Champagne, etc.
BEST BARGAINS
Champagne (HB), Chomel 1850
France (FB), Chomel 1850
France (FB), Chomel 1850
France (FB) 12 persons)
... (for 4 or 5 per person)

SKI SUPPER.
22 March 1961, London SW1X SE.
[Brochure only, 24 pages, 7-
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BEST THING THAT

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days at amazing prices.

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SERVICES

MATE MONEY
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new article or story writing
the "only" information
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rates, correspondence

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highest rates. W. L. O.
Raffles Street, W. L. O.

RENTALS

Largest
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city
12
rooms
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bath
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SPEREND & CO.
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 2-bedroom house over-
 looking green. 2-1/2 recep-
 tion, 2 bath, P.W. 220V.
 3-1/2 Cottages, Unfurnished 3-
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 reception, flat, modern
 220V 220V.
 3-1/2 Cottages, 2-bedroom, family
 3 good trees, K75.
JOHN'S WOOD, K75 flat.
 220V.
499 5334

**MAKE PERSONNEL
 (CONSULTANTS)**
 THE TOP JOBS LOOK-
 ING FOR YOU IN THE NEW

[illegible]

Plans for short lots. Rents	
2180 p.w. Allen Bates & Co.	Cont
1665.	
E. Robinson - I want to see you	

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